

قُرْآنٌ مَّجِيدٌ

THE HOLY QURAN

WITH

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

AND

COMMENTARY

VOLUME 5

SŪRAH AL-AḤQĀF–SŪRAH AN-NĀS

*Published under the auspices of
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad,
Fifth Successor of the Promised Messiah,
and Supreme Head of the Worldwide
Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community*

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE (1988 Edition)

This five volume commentary of the Holy Quran is an English translation of the commentary on the Holy Quran by the Second Head of the Ahmadiyya Community, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II.

His published work on the Holy Quran comprises a ten volume commentary in Urdu (*Tafseer-e-Kabir*) covering the following Surahs: *Al-Fatihah* & *Al-Baqarah*, *Yunus* to *Al-Ankabut* and from *Al-Naba* to *Al-Nas*. The present English commentary is based on that commentary. As far as the remaining Surahs are concerned, that is chapters: *Al-i-Imran* to *Al-Taubah* and from *Al-Ahqaf* to *Al-Mursalat*, the compiling Editors have made use of the extensive notes prepared by the late Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II in preparing a detailed and comprehensive commentary which he was unfortunately unable to complete in his life time. The commentary of such chapters is nonetheless based on his own deliberations.

This commentary is a unique masterpiece. It is an excellent exegesis on the true meaning of the Holy Quran. Although no commentary can ever claim to encompass the final interpretation of the Holy Quran, the manner in which this rich treasure has been prised open by an author who had deep insight into the meaning of the Holy Quran, has certainly set the standard by which all future commentaries ought to be judged.

An index and the following listings have been added in the present edition at the end of the fifth volume:

Table of contents of the Index

Alphabetical listing of chapters of the Holy Quran.

Important Arabic words and expressions explained in the commentary

The Index of subjects.

The Publishers acknowledge and sincerely thank the following members of U. S. A. Jamaat in particular and their helpers in general for the very careful and hard work in preparing these listings and the index so exhaustively:

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The cost of publishing this five-volume commentary has been met jointly by members of the Ahmadiyya Community in the United States of America and the United Kingdom on the happy occasion of the thanksgiving Centenary Jubilee Celebrations of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Community in Islam.

The funds generated from its sale will be recycled in the further publication of the Holy Quran. May Allah grant abundant reward to all those who have contributed towards this publication.

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FOREWORD

The Holy Quran is the Word of God Almighty that was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, over a period of 23 years. Since its revelation, the inimitability of its text has been widely acclaimed and acknowledged by friend and foe alike. Its verses made such a miraculous impact that some enemies of Islam, driven by extreme frustration, resorted to calling it magic, accusing the Holy Prophet^{sa} of being a sorcerer, and preventing their fellow non-Muslims from hearing its recitation. Nevertheless, it was only a matter of time before its greatest enemies became its greatest admirers, or were destroyed in the very process of seeking its destruction.

Allah the Exalted says in the Holy Quran that He Himself would safeguard it:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Verily We Ourself have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We will be its Guardian. (Al-Ḥijr 15:10)

Under the close and careful guidance of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, the earliest Muslims—including the scribes, and those who had memorized the Book—exercised great care and precaution in its compilation, recitation, and preservation. Meticulous care was taken to ensure that the words of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the personal notes of his Companions^{ra} were not intermixed with the Word of God.

Once the text had been fully preserved and disseminated widely, the need was felt for commentaries. However, as the Word of God is replete with sublime prophecies and profound verities, the infinite magnificence of the Holy Quran can never be fully comprehended in any commentary. Nevertheless, to help readers understand the historical context and significance of the revealed verses, several commentaries were written by eminent scholars. These commentaries generally relied on the Ḥadith, Sunnah, lexicons, and historical texts. However, in this process, some went to the extent of accepting the traditions of the Jews and Christians in commenting upon some verses. In the last few centuries, some orientalist have written commentaries on the Holy Quran and have critiqued some verses based upon their own traditions and perceptions of history.

The Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah and Imām Mahdī^{as} was commissioned to revive faith and establish the law of Islam. Accordingly, his very first book,

Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, was devoted to establish the divine origin of the Holy Quran and the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}.

The Five Volume Commentary is based upon the divinely inspired commentaries made by Ḥaḍrat al-Muṣleḥ al-Mau'ūd, Mirzā Bashīr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad^{ra}, the second Successor of the Promised Messiah^{as}. It builds upon the early Islamic sources and the divinely inspired insights of the Promised Messiah^{as} to bring a fresh new perspective on the Quran's versatility and meaning. It also effectively and forcefully responds to the criticism of the Latter Day orientalisks.

The current edition of the Five Volume Commentary corrects scribal errors and makes minor editorial changes to promote readability. Typesetting and initial formatting of this edition of the Five Volume Commentary was done by Wakalat-e-Ishā'at under the supervision of Mirza Anas Aḥmad, M.A., M.Litt., (Oxon.). Final proofreading and valuable suggestions for improvement were provided by various individuals, including the following: Khalil Malik, Rashida Kalim Rana, Naser-ud-Din Shams, Sardar Anees Ahmad, Sabahat Ahmad Cheema, Hassan Khan, Faraz Husain, Abdul-Wahab Mirza, Qamar Ahmed Zafar, Zulfīqar Abbasi, Ahmad Nooruddeen Jangeerkhan, Aneeq ur Rehman, Nafees Qamar Ahmed, and Syed Tanwir Mujtaba. May Allah the Almighty grant all of them the best reward in this life and the Hereafter. *Āmīn*.

Al-Ḥāj Munir-ud-Din Shams

Additional Wakīl-ut-Taṣnīf

London, England

September 2018

PREFACE (1988 Edition)

Glory be to the name of our Lord that the great and noble work of preparing an exhaustive Commentary of the Qur’ān has come to a successful end. Enormous labour, money and time have gone into the preparation of this Commentary, covering, as it does over 3,300 pages, including a very learned Introduction from the pen of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr-ud-Dīn, Maḥmūd Aḥmad, Second Successor of the Promised Messiah. The present book constitutes the Third Volume of the Commentary and deals with 69 chapters—from *Sūra Al-Aḥqāf* to *Sūra An-Nās*.

The preparation of the Commentary was originally entrusted to a Board of Editors, Consisting of the late Maulawī Sher ‘Alī, Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad, M.A., and Malik Ghulām Farīd, M.A., present Editor of the Commentary. The Commentary is based mainly on the material culled and collected from the writings and speeches of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad, present Head of the Aḥmadiyya Community. The First Volume had hardly appeared when, with the Partition of India, in 1947, the whole work was thrown out of gear. The Headquarters of the Movement had to be shifted to Pakistan, and much of the very useful religious literature produced by the Community in the past five decades was left behind. Immediately after, Maulawī Sher ‘Alī died and Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad was called to other important duties, and the writer of these lines was left alone to carry on the work which by the grace of God has now been successfully completed.

This Volume follows the same scheme and arrangement with regard to Text, Translation & Commentary of the Holy Book as followed in the earlier Volumes. It would be useful, therefore, to reproduce here the relevant extract from the Preface of Volume I.

The Arabic text has been given side by side with the English translation. A mere translation without the text is likely to endanger the purity of the text, besides depriving the reader of the opportunity of comparison, verification, and of making a critical study of the Holy Book.

The annotations of the text have been generally divided into two parts. The first deals with Important Words in the verse under comment. These words, along with other words derived from the same root, particularly those occurring in other parts of the Qur’ān, have been explained and examples given to illustrate their different uses. These explanations are based on the standard lexicons of the Arabic language, such as the *Lisān al-‘Arab*, the *Tāj*

al-‘Arūs, the Mufradāt of Imām Rāghib, the Arabic-English Lexicon by E. W. Lane and the Aqrab al-Mawārid. As regards the Translation, our procedure has been to base the meaning of every word first on the corroborative testimony of other parts of the Quran and secondly on the context. The words printed in italics have been added to explain the meaning of the text, in case where are no words corresponding to them in the original.

The second part consists of Explanatory Notes or Commentary. Every Note first derives its authority from the tenor and spirit of the Qur’ān as expressed in various other places. Next to the Qur’ān precedence is given to the *Ḥadīth* and then come the standard dictionaries of the Arabic language. Last of all, recourse has been had to the evidence of history which is necessary for the explanation of such verses as refer to well-known historical events.

In the course of the preparation of these notes light has been thrown from time to time on the order which runs through the verses of each chapter, the one following the other in natural sequence; and a careful perusal of these Notes will convince the reader that the Qur’ān forms a thoroughly consistent and coherent reading.

A system of cross-references has been introduced. These cross-references have been placed below the text and the translation. They give at a glance the various places where the subject of a particular verse has been dealt with elsewhere in the Qur’ān.

An Introduction is prefixed to each chapter (a General Introduction appears in volume I, which serves as an introduction to a scientific study of whole Book). The Introduction to each chapter discusses the place and date of its revelation and gives a summary of its contents and the relation it has with the chapters preceding or following it. It also provides sufficient material for the reader to understand and realize that not only the position of every chapter of the Qur’ān as a whole but also the verses of each chapter themselves are governed by an intelligent order.

The abbreviations, CH. and PT. appearing at the top of each page stand for Chapter and Part respectively. The Qur’ān has been divided into (a) *Sūrās* or Chapters, and (b) *Sipārās* or Parts. The division of the Qur’ān into *Sūrās* is made according to its subject matter and has behind it the authority of the Holy Prophet and the Qur’ān; each of these *Sūrās* having been so designated in the Holy Book, as in 2:24 and 24:2. The total number of the *Sūrās* is 114.

The number of Chapter and that of Part is shown at the top of each

PREFACE

page. In numbering the verses we have followed the system in vogue in the standard editions of the Qur'ān in India and Pakistan, with the exception that in our numbering *Bismillah* is counted as the first verse of every chapter, while in other editions the verse following *Bismillah* is numbered as the first verse of the chapter. Chapter 9, however, is an exception to this rule. It does not begin with *Bismillah*, and, therefore, numbering in this chapter is identical with that of other editions of the Qur'ān. Numbering of the Notes, however, is continuous. It does not end where a *Sūra* ends but is continued into the next *Sūra* throughout the book.

References to verses have been made by two figures separated by a colon; the first figure shows the number of the chapter, while the second that of the verse. When the reference is to a chapter of the Qur'ān, the word "Qur'ān" is invariably omitted for the sake of brevity. Thus, 20:8 refers to the 8th verse of the 20th chapter of the Qur'ān. In the case of references to other religious Scriptures, however, the name of the Book is always mentioned, though in an abbreviated form. Thus Gen. 5:6 means the 6th verse of the fifth chapter of Genesis, the first Book of Moses.

Index of the whole book is under preparation and will take some time to be ready as it is expected to run into several hundred pages. It will be published as a separate volume.

The Editor thanks Maulawī Nūrud-Dīn Munīr, M.A., Maulawī Muḥammad Aḥmad Jalīl, B.A., H.A., and particularly Qāzī 'Abdul Ḥamīd. B.A., LL.B., for carefully reading the proofs and making useful suggestions.

Rabwah, West Pakistan

10th March, 1963.

System of Transliteration

In transliterating Arabic words we have followed the system adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society.

ا at the beginning of a word, pronounced as *a*, *i*, *u* preceded by a very slight aspiration, like *h* in the English word 'honour'.

ث *th*, pronounced like *th* in the English word 'thing'.

ح *h*, a guttural aspirate, stronger than *h*.

خ *kh*, pronounced, like the Scotch *ch* in 'loch'.

ذ *dh*, pronounced like the English *th* in 'that', 'with'.

ص *s*, strongly articulated *s*.

ض *d*, similar to the English *th* in 'this'.

ط *t*, strongly articulated palatal *t*.

ظ *z*, strongly articulated *z*.

ع ' , a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.

غ *gh*, a sound approaches very nearly in the *r* 'grasseye' in French, and in the German *r*. It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the 'gargling' position whilst pronouncing it.

ق *q*, a deep guttural *k* sound.

ء ' , a sort of catch in the voice.

Short vowels are represented by *a* for ا (like *u* in 'bud'); *i* for ي (like *i* in 'bid'); *u* for و (like *oo* in 'wood'); the long vowels by *ā* for اَ or آ (like *a* in 'father'); *ī* for يَ or إ (like *ee* in 'deep'); *ai* for يَ اِ (like *i* in 'site'); *ū* for وَ اُ (like *oo* in 'root'); *au* for وَ اِ (resembling *ou* in 'sound').

The consonants not included in the above list have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe.

CHAPTER 46

AL-AḤQĀF

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

This is the seventh and last *Sūrah* of the *Ḥā Mīm* group. Like other *Sūrahs* of this group, it was revealed at Mecca towards the middle of the Prophet's ministry before *Hijrah*, at a time when opposition to the new Message had become bitter, persistent and organized. Nöldeke places the revelation of the *Sūrah* immediately after chapter 7. It seems to resemble its sister *Sūrahs* of the *Ḥā Mīm* group in tone and tenor. The *Sūrah* has 36 verses including *Bismillah* and takes its title from v. 22.

The preceding *Sūrah* had ended on the solemn declaration that "God is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, His is the Majesty, and He is the Mighty, the Wise." In the present *Sūrah* the claim made in these words is justified. The Quran has been revealed by the Wise and Mighty God. God is Wise in the sense that the Quranic teaching is based on sound and solid foundations, and is supported by reason, common sense and accumulated human experience; and He is Mighty in the sense that by living up to its ideals and principles the Muslims will gain ascendancy and predominance over their opponents. The *Sūrah* deals primarily with the subjects of prophethood and Divine revelation, with special reference to the revelation of the Quran, and with Unity of God, and life after death, in regard to which fulfilment of prophecies made in the Quran is adduced as an argument.

Subject Matter

Like its six predecessors of the *Ḥā Mīm* group, the *Sūrah* opens with the subject of the Quranic revelation and Divine Unity which constitutes its main theme, and gives the following few arguments in refutation of idolatry:

(a) Only that being can command and demand of us that we should adore and worship Him Who, besides being our Creator and Sustainer, is Almighty and All-Powerful and can therefore compel obedience to His laws and commandments; but the false gods of idolaters are not only not creators but are themselves created. (b) Idolatry finds no support in any revealed Scripture. (c) Human knowledge, reason, and experience repel it and revolt against it. (d) A deity which cannot, and does not, answer our prayer is of no

use, and the so-called gods of idolaters not only are incapable of responding to the prayers of their votaries, they are even unconscious of having been called upon by them.

The *Sūrah* then proceeds to say that by laying claim to prophethood, the Holy Prophet has not brought forward any innovation. Divine Messengers have been appearing at all times and among all peoples to teach them Unity of God and their duty to their fellow beings, and the revelation vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet contains the essentials of all those revealed teachings. The *Sūrah* further says that the truth of the Quranic revelation is supported not only by the intrinsic worth of its teaching but also by the prophecies which Moses, the greatest Israelite Prophet, centuries ago, had made about it. The *Sūrah* then dismisses as foolish and unfounded the disbelievers' plea which, in their conceit and ignorance, they put forward as an excuse for rejecting the Divine revelation, viz. "if there had been any good in the revelation presented to us, we, being better informed and better placed in life, would have been the first to accept it." The *Sūrah* further says that whereas disbelievers, proud of their great material resources and social status, reject the Divine Message, others who are endowed with faith and spiritual wealth, accept it, and stick to it under the severest trials and tribulations, till they are comforted with the Divine assurance, viz. "no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve. These are the fortunate ones from whom God shall accept their good works and overlook their ill deeds."

The *Sūrah* then cites the fate of 'Ād—a people who had flourished in the neighbourhood of the Meccans—to show that disbelief never prospers and is sure to come to grief in the long run. The Adites were so completely destroyed that not a vestige of their great and glorious civilization remained behind.

Towards its end the *Sūrah* sounds a note of warning to the people of the Holy Prophet. They are told that they should not be misled by their wealth and prosperity and by the poverty and weakness of Muslims, and that if they persisted in rejecting the Divine Message, their present prosperity itself would prove to be their ruin, because rejection of Truth never goes unpunished.

The *Sūrah* ends with an exhortation to the Holy Prophet and his followers, calling upon them, as brave votaries of Truth, to bear with patience and fortitude, all the suffering and persecution to which they were being subjected, as the time was fast approaching when the cause of Truth would

triumph and their persecutors would stand before them in utter disgrace and humiliation, begging for forgiveness and mercy.



(AL-AḤQĀF)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious the Merciful. **3757**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bHā Mīm. **3758**

هـ ميم

ح ٣٦

3. ^cThe revelation of this Book is from Allah, the Mighty, the Wise. **3759**

تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ②

4. ^dWe have not created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, but with truth, and for an appointed term; but those who disbelieve turn away

مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ③ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَمَّا أُنذِرُوا مُّعْرِضُونَ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b40:2; 41:2; 42:2; 43:2; 44:2; 45:2. ^c20:5; 32:3; 36:6; 40:3; 45:3. ^d21:17; 38:28; 44:39.

3757. Commentary:

See 1:1.

3758. Commentary:

For general treatment of abbreviated letters see 2:2 & 19:2. Verses 40:2, 42:2 & 45:2, however, deal particularly with the letters حم which, as in the preceding six chapters, are placed at the beginning of the present *Sūrah*. These letters may be taken as standing for one of the following pairs of Divine attributes, i.e. حميد مجيد (Praiseworthy, and Lord of honour), حي قيوم (Living, Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining), حافض الكتاب (Guardian of the Book and Revealer of the Book). These Divine attributes, as also others that are represented by these abbreviated letters, have a strong bearing on the subject matter of the

Sūrah. Unity of God, refutation and denunciation of idolatry, Divine revelation, with special reference to the revelation of the Quran, life after death and the triumph of truth over falsehood are some of the important topics dealt with in the seven *Sūrahs* of the حم group, as Divine attributes represented by these abbreviated letters indicate.

3759. Commentary:

The verse signifies that the Message of this Book—the Quran—is bound to succeed as it has been revealed by God Who is Mighty. And because its Revealer is the Wise God, it contains the quintessence of the accumulated wisdom of saints and seers of the past ages and is also the compendium of the imperishable teachings of all revealed Scriptures.

from that of which they have been warned. **3760**

5. Say, "Do you know what it is you call on beside Allah? Show me what they have created of the earth. Or have they a share in the *creation of* the heavens? Bring me a Book *revealed* before this or some vestige of knowledge *in your support*, if you indeed speak the truth.' **3761**

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
أَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقُوا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ أَمْ لَهُمْ
شِرْكٌ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ ۚ إِيْتُونِي بِكِتَابٍ
مِّنْ قَبْلِ هَذَا أَوْ أَثَرَةٍ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

"35:41.

3760. Commentary:

The verse means to say that the creation of heavens and the earth is intended to serve an eternal purpose which is to serve man who is, God's noblest handiwork, and the aim and object of whose life is to develop in himself Divine attributes. For the attainment by man of this grand and sublime object, God raised His Messengers in all times and among all peoples. To these Messengers He revealed Himself, and to them He gave His teaching. The greatest and noblest of these Divine Messengers was the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, and the last and most complete and perfect code of Divine laws is the Quran.

The creation of the heavens and the earth also establishes the eternal truth that there is only One Designer, Creator and Controller of the universe. It constitutes an unassailable argument against idolatry.

The words "for an appointed time"

signify that the universe had a beginning and will also have an end. It is to this great truth that the verses, "All that is on it will pass away. And there will remain only the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour" (55:27-28), refer.

3761. Important Words:

أثر (vestige) is the inf. noun from أثار and means, a remain or relic of a thing; a trace; sign or mark; vestige or track; a footprint; impression or mark made by the foot of a man upon the ground (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

With this verse begins a systematic refutation and condemnation of شرک i.e. idolatry. It means to say that only that Being can command adoration and is fit to be worshipped Who as the Architect and Creator of the universe controls our destinies. But the false gods of idolaters not only have not created anything but are themselves created. They do not even possess any power to harm or benefit

6. And who is in greater error than those who, instead of Allah, pray unto such as will not answer them till the Day of Resurrection, and ^athey are even unaware of their prayer?³⁷⁶²

وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ يَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
مَنْ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ
وَهُمْ عَنْ دُعَائِهِمْ غَفْلُونَ ﴿٣٧٦٢﴾

7. ^bAnd when mankind is gathered together, they (false deities) will be enemies to them (their worshippers) and will deny their worship.³⁷⁶³

وَإِذَا حُشِرَ النَّاسُ كَانُوا لَهُمْ أَعْدَاءً
وَكَانُوا بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ كَافِرِينَ ﴿٣٧٦٣﴾

^a10:30. ^b6:23; 10:29.

themselves, nor have they any power over death, life or Resurrection (25:4). Then what title or right have they to man's worship of them? The verse further says that in reality no authority except that of a revealed Scripture can form the basis for determining whether a certain belief is right or wrong. The words "Or some vestige of knowledge in your support" signify that human science and reason as well lend no support to idolatrous beliefs or practices. Thus this little verse embodies three very strong and cogent arguments to repudiate and demolish polytheistic and idolatrous doctrines.

3762. Important Words:

The verse embodies yet another very convincing argument against idol worship. Islam presents a Living God Who listens to the prayers of His devotees and has given proof of this fact in every age. He reveals Himself to His true votaries by accepting their prayers and consoles them in the hour

of distress by speaking to them words of comfort. How encouraging and hope-raising are the Quranic words: "And when My servants ask thee about Me, say, I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me" (2:187). Other religions hold out no such promise to their followers. Let them cry hoarse, the Quran says, their false gods will never answer their prayer because they do not possess any such power. Of what use, then, is that deity which is deaf and dumb and hears and answers not the agonised cries of its votaries?

3763. Commentary:

In this verse the votaries of false gods are told that not only will their gods not answer their prayers unto the Day of Resurrection, but will disown them on that awful day when they (the idolaters) will be made to face the consequences of their idolatrous beliefs and practices.

8. ^aAnd when Our clear Signs are recited unto them, those who disbelieve say of the truth when it comes to them, 'This is manifest sorcery.'

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ٨

9. Do they say, 'He has forged it?'^b Say, 'If I have forged it, you cannot avail me aught against Allah. He knows best what *idle* talk you indulge in. Sufficient is He for a Witness between me and you. And He is the Most Forgiving, the Merciful.' 3764

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ ۚ قُلْ إِنِ افْتَرَيْتُهُ فَلَا تَمْلِكُونَ لِي مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۚ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ ۚ كَفَىٰ بِهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ٩

10. Say, 'I am not a novelty among the Messengers, nor do I know what will be done with me or with you *in this life*. 'I do but follow what is revealed to me; and I am but a plain Warner.' 3765

قُلْ مَا كُنْتُ بِدْعًا مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ وَمَا أَدْرِي مَا يُفْعَلُ بِي وَلَا بِكُمْ ۚ إِنِ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ١٠

^a34:44; 61:7. ^b11:36. ^c6:51; 7:204; 10:16; 33:3.

3764. Commentary:

After effectively refuting شرک (idolatry) in the preceding few verses, the *Sūrah*, in the present verse, proceeds to deal with the next important topic—Divine revelation. It purports to say that forging lies about God, being a fatal poison, is bound to bring about the spiritual death and destruction of the forger. This is the significance of the words: "You cannot avail me aught against Allah." The words, "Sufficient is He for a witness between me and you," signify

that "if I am a forger of lies against God, He would not let me go unpunished, but if you reject the Message of Truth, you too will have to suffer the evil consequences of your rejection."

The expression من الله means: (a) in opposition to Allah; (b) from the punishment of Allah.

3765. Commentary:

بدعاً (new) is derived from بدع which means, he originated a thing or brought it into existence for the first time, the thing not having existed

11. Say, 'Tell me, if this is from Allah and you disbelieve therein, and a ^awitness from among the Children of Israel bears witness to *the advent of one like him*, and he believed, but you are too proud to believe, how should you fare?' Verily, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people. **3766**

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
وَكَفَرْتُمْ بِهِ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ
بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِ فَأَمَنَ
وَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ ^ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ^ع

^a11:18; 61:7.

before, and not after the similitude of anything pre-existing. They say فلان بدع i.e. such a one is the first person to do this thing. بدع means, first; new; a first doer of a thing; novel; a thing existing for the first time; an innovator (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2:118.

Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is here enjoined to tell his people that his being raised as a Divine Messenger was not a new thing. He was no innovator. They were already conversant with the phenomenon of prophethood. God had been raising His Messengers during the ages when people forsook the path of righteousness. He had raised Prophets in their neighbourhood, and, now, He had selected them for the bestowal of this great gift. They should, therefore, judge the Holy Prophet by the criteria by which the former Prophets were judged. The Holy Prophet is further asked to tell them that though there was no doubt that ultimately his cause would triumph, he was not

vouchsafed the knowledge of the vicissitudes of circumstances through which he himself would have to pass during the intervening period, nor did he know how God would treat his opponents. His mission was confined to delivering the Divine Message to them and to warn them that if they did not behave they would come to grief.

3766. Commentary:

The witness from among the Children of Israel is Moses. It is to his prophecy concerning the advent of the Holy Prophet that reference has been made in this verse. The prophecy is to this effect:

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren *like unto thee*, and will put My words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him (Deut. 18:18-19).

See also 11:18.

The reference in the words 'a witness from among the Children of

R. 2.

12. And those who disbelieve say of those who believe: ^a‘If it were any good, they could not have been ahead of us in attaining it.’ And since they have not been guided thereby, they will say, ‘This is an old lie.’³⁷⁶⁷

13. And before it there was ^bthe Book of Moses, a guide and a mercy; and ^cthis is a Book in the Arabic language fulfilling previous prophecies, that it may warn those who do wrong; and as glad tidings to those who do good.³⁷⁶⁸

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَوْ كَانَ
خَيْرًا مَّا سَبَقُونَا إِلَيْهِ^ط وَإِذْ لَمْ يَهْتَدُوا بِهِ
فَيَقُولُونَ هَذَا إِفْكٌ قَدِيمٌ^{١٧}

وَمِنْ قَبْلِهِ كَتَبَ مُوسَى إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً^ط
وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّسَانِ عَرَبِيٍّ لِّيُنذِرَ
الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا^{١٨} وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُحْسِنِينَ^ج

^a11:28. ^b28:44. ^c20:114; 42:8; 43:4.

Israel' could not be, as generally misunderstood, to 'Abdullāh bin Salām, a learned Jew, because 'Abdullāh had accepted Islam in Medina while this *Sūrah* was revealed at Mecca.

3767. Commentary:

One of the great impediments that stand in the way of truth being accepted by disbelievers is conceit and arrogance. Since it is the poor people and those not high placed in life and generally not conversant with current material sciences, who first accept the Divine Message, the so-called learned and wealthy people regard it beneath their dignity to associate themselves with the humble and lowly believers. It is to this proud attitude of disbelievers that the verse refers. It depicts conceited and arrogant disbelievers as saying to

believers, that if there had been any good in the new Teaching, they (disbelievers), who were better placed in life and possessed better knowledge, could not have been outstripped by the former in accepting it, and that, as it was an old, old lie, they could not accept it.

3768. Commentary:

Verse 11 above referred to the appearance of a Prophet among the Ishmaelites. The present verse refers to Arabia as the scene of the advent of the Prophet who was to be the like of Moses and to the Book (the Quran) which was to fulfil the prophecies contained in the Book of Moses and which also was to supersede it. The relevant prophecy is as follows:

The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye

14. "Verily, those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah,' and then are steadfast—no fear *shall come* upon them, nor shall they grieve.³⁷⁶⁹

15. These are the dwellers of the Garden; they shall abide therein—a recompense for what they did.

16. ^bAnd We have enjoined on man to be good to his parents. His mother bears him with pain, and brings him forth with pain, and the bearing of him and his weaning *takes* thirty months, till, when he attains his full maturity and reaches *the age of* forty years, he says, ^c"My Lord, grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and I may do such good works as may please Thee. And establish righteousness among my progeny for me. I do

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا
فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ^{١٤}

أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا^{١٥}
جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ^{١٥}

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا
حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا
وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِصْلُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ
رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي
أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ
صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي^{١٦}
إِنِّي تَتَّبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ^{١٧}

^a41:31. ^b6:152; 19:33; 29:9. ^c27:20.

travelling companies of Dedanim. The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they presented with their bread him that fled (Isaiah 21:13-15).

See also 26:198.

3769. Commentary:

What fear or grief, even under the severest trial, can possibly disturb the equanimity and mental poise of a true

believer, who possesses an invincible faith that Allah, the Creator and Lord of the whole universe, is at his back? It is this certain faith that has caused the Faithful in all ages to lay down their lives smilingly in the cause of Truth. Such believers have been called *محسنين* (doers of good) in verse 13 above. They abide in the Garden of heavenly bliss and bask in the sun of God's love. See also 41:31.

turn to Thee; and, truly, I am of those who submit to Thee.’³⁷⁷⁰

17. Those are they from whom We accept their good works and overlook their ill deeds. *They shall be* among the inmates of the Garden, *in fulfilment of*^a the true promise which was made to them.³⁷⁷¹

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا
عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي
أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ وَعَدَ الصِّدْقِ الَّذِي
كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٧٧١﴾

^a17:109; 19:62; 73:19.

3770. Important Words:

أشد (full maturity) is derived from شد. They say شد الشيء i.e. he made the thing hard, firm, compact, strong, or he bound it fast. أشد (ashudd) means, physical and intellectual and also spiritual maturity as gives evidence of rectitude of conduct or course of life; firmness or soundness of judgement produced by experience. (Lane).

Commentary:

The word seems to have been used in the sense of spiritual maturity in the present verse and in 12:23; and in the sense of intellectual and physical maturity in 6:153 and 18:83. Generally, Divine Messengers are invested with their divine mission at the age of forty. The belief that Jesus was made a Prophet at the age of 33 seems to be an historical anachronism, as recent research into Christian history has proved his birth to have taken place about six years earlier than generally understood (Enc. Brit. under "Chronicle").

أوزعنى (grant me the power) is derived from وزع. They say وزع فلاناً أو بفلان i.e. he hindered or led or drove forth

such a one and restrained him; he urged or incited such a one. أوزع الله فلاناً means, God inspired or granted such a one the power to do a thing. See also 27:18.

In verse 13 above a brief reference has been made to محسنين (doers of good). The present verse enjoins a believer to do good (احسان) to all his fellow beings, irrespective of caste, colour or clime, starting, however, with his parents, the mother having secured a special mention, as also in 31:15 because "she bears him with pain, and brings him forth with pain".

In 31:15, it was stated that the weaning of a child takes two years, but in the verse under comment the combined period of pregnancy and suckling is given as thirty months which leaves six months as the period of gestation, and that seems to be the period during which a pregnant woman feels the burden of pregnancy, the fourth month being the time when she begins to have such a feeling.

3771. Important Words:

نتجاوز (We shall overlook) is derived from جاز. They say جاز المكان أو جاوزه i.e. he

18. But the one who says to his parents, ‘Fie on you both! do you threaten me that I shall be brought forth *again*, when generations have already passed away before me?’ And they both cry unto Allah for help *and say to him*: ‘Woe unto thee! believe; for the promise of Allah is true.’ But he says, ‘This is nothing but the fables of the ancients.’³⁷⁷²

19. These are they against whom the sentence of *punishment* became due, ^aalong with the communities of the jinn and mankind that had gone before them. Indeed, they were the losers.

20. And for all are degrees of *rank* according to what they did,^b and that Allah may fully repay them for their deeds; and they shall not be wronged.³⁷⁷³

وَالَّذِي قَالَ لِوَالِدَيْهِ أُفٍّ لَّكُمَا
اتَّعَذَّبْنِي أَنْ أَخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ
الْقُرُونُ مِنْ قَبْلِي ۖ وَهُمَا يَسْتَغِيثَانِ اللَّهَ
وَيْلَكَ أَمِنْ ۚ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَيَقُولُ
مَا هَذَا إِلَّا آسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٧٧٢﴾

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي
أَمْرِ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنَ الْجِنِّ
وَالْإِنْسِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٣٧٧٣﴾

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَةٍ مِمَّا عَمِلُوا ۖ
وَلِيُؤْفِقِيَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۖ وَهُمْ
لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٧٧٤﴾

^a3:138; 7:39; 13:31; 41:26. ^b6:133.

passed along the place and left it behind. جاوز الحد means, he exceeded the proper limit or became extravagant or exorbitant. تجاوز عن ذنبه means, he overlooked sin; he forgave him. (Lane).

3772. Commentary:

In verse 16, reference was made to a class of men who spend their God-given gifts in the service of noble causes in order to win the pleasure of

God, and who are anxious that they might be succeeded by a generation who should carry on their noble work. The verse under comment speaks of those unfortunate people who are born of good and righteous parents and are brought up in very healthy environments and yet lead a life of disbelief and sin.

3773. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that all

21. And on the day when those who disbelieve will be brought before the Fire, *it will be said to them*, ‘You exhausted your good things in the life of the world, and you *fully* enjoyed them. ^aNow this day you shall be requited with ignominious punishment because you were arrogant in the earth without justification, and because you acted rebelliously.’³⁷⁷⁴

R. 3.

22. And make mention of ^bthe brother of ‘Ād, when he warned his people among the sandhills—and Warners there have been before him and after him—*saying*, ‘Worship none but Allah. I fear for you the punishment of a great day.’³⁷⁷⁵

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ
أَذْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبَاتِكُمْ فِي حَيَاتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا
وَأَسْتَمْتُمْ بِهَا فَالْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ
الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ فِي
الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ
تَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَإِذْ كُنَّا آخَا عَادٍ إِذْ أَنْذَرَ قَوْمَهُ
بِالْأَحْقَافِ وَقَدْ خَلَّتِ النَّذِيرُ مِنْ بَيْنِ
يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ
إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ
عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

^a6:94. ^b7:66; 11:51.

the works, good or evil, of the two classes of men mentioned in vv. 16 and 18 above, will be properly judged and weighed, and, while being requited, their motives and intentions and all relevant circumstances, will be taken into consideration, as the Divine law of compensation works in this way that whereas the reward of a good deed is many times greater than the deed itself, the punishment of the evil deed is proportionate to the deed committed.

3774. Commentary:

When confronted with the

consequences of their evil deeds, the disbelievers will be told on the Day of Reckoning that as they had fully exploited and drained to dregs the material gifts that God had bestowed upon them and had used them not in the service of good causes but to further their own sordid ends, they should be prepared to suffer disgrace and ignominy as a fit requital for their misdeeds.

3775. Commentary:

‘Ād was not the name of one tribe but of a group of tribes. The tribe has

23. They said, ‘Hast thou come to us to turn us away from our gods? Bring us then that with which thou dost threaten us, if *indeed* thou art of the truthful.’^a 3776

24. He said, ‘The knowledge *thereof* is only with Allah.’^b And I convey to you what I have been sent with, but I see you to be a very ignorant people.’ 3777

25. Then, when they saw it coming towards their valleys as a cloud, they said, ‘This is a cloud which will give us rain.’ ‘Nay, but it is that which you

قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا لِنَاْفِكَنَا عَنْ آلِهَتِنَا ۚ فَأْتِنَا
بِمَا تَعِدُّنَا إِنَّ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٣٧٦﴾

قَالَ اِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۖ وَاُبَلِّغُكُمْ مَا
اُرْسِلْتُ بِهٖ وَلٰكِنِّىْ اُرِيْكُمْ قَوْمًا
تَجْهَلُوْنَ ﴿٣٧٧﴾

فَلَمَّا رَاُوْهُ عَارِضًا مُّسْتَقْبِلَ اَوْدِيَّتِهِمْ ۚ
قَالُوْا هٰذَا عَارِضٌ مُّمْطِرُنَا ۚ بَلْ هُوَ مَا
اَسْتَعْجَلْتُمْ بِهِ ۖ رِيْحٌ فِیْهَا عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿٣٧٨﴾

^a7:71. ^b11:34.

been called ‘Ādi Iram in the Quran (89:8). They were a highly powerful and cultured people and had specialized in architecture. They ruled over rich and fertile territories in Yemen. As a result of their rejection of the Prophet Hūd, and their wicked and immoral deeds, they were destroyed by a violent wind which continued to lash them for seven consecutive days, burying their chief cities under heaps of sand and dust. For detailed notes on ‘Ād see 11:51 and 26:124.

3776. Important Words:

لِنَاْفِكُنَا (that thou turn us away) is derived from اَنَكَ (afaka). اَنَكَ means, he changed his or its condition or manner of being; he turned him or it away or back from a thing by lying;

he perverted his judgement; he deceived or beguiled him; he lied or said what was untrue (Lane & Aqrab). Almost all these meanings are applicable here.

3777. Commentary:

When tauntingly asked by his people, when and how they would be punished for rejecting him, Hūd pleaded ignorance of the time and manner of the Divine punishment. But he warned them at the same time that Divine punishment was sure to overtake them and that if they had some wisdom left with them they should have read the writing on the wall because the rejection of Divine Message never goes unpunished. This is the significance of the words: "but I see you to be a very ignorant people."

sought to hasten—^aa wind wherein is a grievous punishment.³⁷⁷⁸

26. 'It will destroy everything by the command of its Lord.'

^bAnd they became such that there was naught to be seen, except their dwellings. Thus do We requite the guilty people.³⁷⁷⁹

27. And ^cWe had established them in wherein We have not established you; and We gave them ears and eyes and hearts. But their ears and their eyes and their hearts availed them naught, since they denied the Signs of Allah; and ^dthat at which they used to mock encompassed them.³⁷⁸⁰

تَدْمِرُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهَا فَاصْبِرُوا
لَا يَرَى إِلَّا مَسْكِنَهُمْ ^طكَذَلِكَ
نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ^{٢٦}

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّهُمْ فِيمَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فِيهِ
وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ سَمْعًا وَآبْصَارًا وَأَفِئَّةً ^ث
فَمَا أَغْنَى عَنْهُمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَلَا
آبْصَارُهُمْ وَلَا أَفِئَتُهُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
إِذْ كَانُوا يَجْحَدُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَحَاقَ
بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ^{٢٧}

^a41:17. ^b7:73. ^c6:7; 7:11. ^d11:9; 21:42.

3778. Important Words:

عارض (cloud) is the act. part. from عرض They say عرض الشيء i.e. he showed, manifested, presented the thing. عارض means, anything showing its breadth or side, hence appearing; a collection of clouds extending sideways in the horizon or a collection of clouds that come over in the sky unexpectedly or appear like a mountain; a gift appearing from a person (Lane & Aqrab).

Whereas the word ریح (wind) has been used in the Quran both in a good and a bad sense, its plural always is used in a good sense.

3779. Commentary:

As mentioned above, the Adites were specially advanced in architecture. They built monuments on high places and erected palatial buildings. They had their summer residences, their factories and mechanical works. But they were so completely destroyed that it seemed that they had never existed and only the ruined remnants of their once lofty and strongly-built dwellings could be seen.

3780. Important Words:

قُور (hearts) is the plural of قُرَّة

R. 4.

28. And We did destroy townships round about you; and We have varied the Signs, that they might turn to *Us*.³⁷⁸¹

29. Why, ^athen, did not those help them whom they had taken for gods beside Allah, seeking

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا مَا حَوْلَكُمْ مِنَ الْقُرَىٰ

وَصَرَّفْنَا الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

فَلَوْلَا نَصْرُهُمُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ قُرْبَانًا آلِهَةً ۚ بَلْ ضَلُّوا عَنْهُمْ ۚ

^a42:47.

which is derived from *فأده*. They say *فأده*, i.e. he or it hit, struck, smote or hurt his *فؤاد* i.e. heart. *فأده اللحم في النار* means, he roasted the flesh meat in the fire. *فؤاد* is synonymous with *قلب* both meaning heart, mind or intellect. In the Quran, too, both these words have been used synonymously. In 28:11, both the words have been used together, signifying the heart. It is the context which determines where any of these words is used in the sense of mind or heart. Some authors, however, make a distinction between *فؤاد* and *قلب*; the latter is said to have a more special signification than the former which is said to be the *غشاء* or the *وعاء* of the *قلب* or the middle or the interior thereof. They say *طار فؤاده* i.e. his mind or intellect or courage tied (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

This verse also shows that the Adites were a very powerful and prosperous people. Their dominions extended over vast areas.

3781. Commentary:

The reference in the words "We did destroy townships round about you" is to the destruction of the once very powerful and prosperous people of

'Ād and of Tubba' who held sway over vast territories in the south of Arabia. To the northwest, the complete ruin of the Thamūd tribe held out a severe warning and on the shores of the Dead Sea were situated the towns of Sodom and Gomorrah which were turned upside down on account of the vice indulged in by them. The destruction of all these places constituted an eye-opener to the Meccans. If they did not eschew their evil ways and continued to reject the Divine Message, they would meet with no better fate. As the Quran, the final Law for all mankind, was revealed at Mecca, the words, *ما حولكم من القرى* may also signify the whole world.

The Quran reverts again and again to the fundamental problems of faith, morals and other kindred subjects, and deals with them from different angles and points of view in order to satisfy doubts and misgivings of men of varied attitudes, mental make-up or outlook on life. People of shallow thinking and prejudiced minds may call it a repetition, but in fact it is the right approach to different human problems.

His nearness through them? Nay, they were lost to them. That was *the result of* their lie, and of what they fabricated.³⁷⁸² 30. And *remember* when ^aWe turned towards thee a party of the jinn who wished to hear the Quran and, when they were present at its *recitation*, they said to one another, ‘Be silent and listen,’ and, when it was finished, they went back to their people, warning *them*.³⁷⁸³

وَذَلِكَ أَفْكَهُمُ وَمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ
يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ
قَالُوا أَصْنُوتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَى
قَوْمِهِمْ مُّنْذِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

^a72:2.

3782. Important Words:

قرباناً (seeking nearness) is infinitive noun from قرب اليه ومنه. They say قرب اليه ومنه i.e. he was or became near to him or it. قرب لله قرباناً (qarraba): he made an offering to God. قربان means, an offering or oblation; a sacrifice; anything by means of which one seeks nearness to God; a near or favourite associate or companion (Lane & Aqrab). The word has been used in the latter sense in 39:4.

Commentary:

The verse contains a very challenging argument against idolatry and drives home to polytheists the futility of their idolatrous beliefs and practices, saying that their false gods can never help them in time of need while the True Almighty God comes to the rescue of His servants when they are in distress and call for His help.

3783. Important Words:

نفر (a party) is derived from نفر

(nafara) which means, he ran away at random; he broke loose and went hither and thither; he became separated and returned to a distance. نفر (nafarun) means, a number of men from three to ten or less than ten; a man's people or tribe consisting of his near relations (Lane).

Commentary:

The party of men referred to in the verse were the Jews of Nusaybin or, as some say, from Mosul or Nineveh in Iraq. Being apprehensive of the Meccans' opposition, they met the Holy Prophet at night and after listening to the Quran and to the Holy Prophet's discourse, they converted to Islam and carried the new Message to their people who also readily accepted it. The next verse leaves no doubt that they were Jews and seemed to be the leaders of their people (Bayān, vol. 8). See also 72:2.

31. They said, ‘O our people ^awe have heard a Book, which has been sent down after Moses, fulfilling that which is before it; it guides to the truth, and to the right path.³⁷⁸⁴

32. ‘O our people, respond to Allah’s Summoner and believe in Him. ^bHe will forgive you your sins, and protect you from a painful punishment.³⁷⁸⁵

33. ^c‘And whoso does not respond to Allah’s Summoner, he cannot escape Him in the earth, nor can he have any protector beside Him. Such are in manifest error.’³⁷⁸⁶

34. Have they not seen that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not

قَالُوا يَقُومُنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ
بَعْدِ مُوسَى مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي
إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَى طَرِيقٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ۝٣١

يَقُومُنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ
يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرْكُم مِّنْ
عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ۝٣٢

وَمَنْ لَا يُجِبْ دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ فَلَيْسَ بِمُعْجِزٍ
فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءُ ۝٣٣
أُولَٰئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝٣٤

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَمْ يَغَيَّرْ بِخَلْقِهِنَّ بِقَدْرِ

^a72:2-3. ^b72:14. ^c72:16.

3784. Commentary:

This verse clearly shows that the party of men mentioned in the previous verse were Jews because they spoke of the Quran as "the Book which has been sent down after Moses".

3785. Commentary:

This and the next verse contain some basic arguments which establish the truth of the claims of a Divine Reformer. First, people are cleansed of sins and impurities and become a model of virtue and righteousness

through the Teaching revealed to him and by his own ennobling example.

3786. Commentary:

Secondly, the Divine Reformer does eventually succeed in his mission as it is God’s unalterable Decree and Law that Truth must prevail and falsehood must come to an evil end. The disbelievers cannot alter this Divine decree, try as they might. The gods which they adore leave them in the lurch when they are confronted with the consequences of their wicked deeds.

wearied by their creation, ^ahas the power to give life to the dead? Yea, verily, He has power over all things.³⁷⁸⁷

35. And on the day when those who disbelieve will be brought before the Fire, ^bit will be said to them, ‘Is not this the truth?’ They will say, ‘Aye, by our Lord.’ He will say, ‘Then taste the punishment, because you disbelieved.’

36. Have patience, then, as the Messengers *possessed* of high resolve had patience; and be in no haste about them. On the day when they see that with which they are threatened, it will appear to them ^cas though they had not tarried save for an hour of a day. *This warning* has been conveyed; and none but the

عَلَىٰ أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ بَلَىٰ إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ
أَلَيْسَ هَذَا بِالْحَقِّ ۖ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّنَا
قَالَ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ
تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ
الرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلْ لَهُمْ ۖ كَانَتْهُمْ
يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ ۖ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا
سَاعَةً مِّنْ نَّهَارٍ ۖ بَلَّغْ ۚ فَهَلْ يَهْتَكُ
إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

^a17:100; 36:82; 86:9. ^b6:28. ^c10:46; 30:56; 79:47.

3787. Important Words:

لم يعي (was not wearied). عي بأمرة means, he lacked power, strength or ability for, or was unable to perform or execute, his affair thoroughly. أعياء means, he was or became disabled or incapacitated; he was or became fatigued, tired, wearied. اعياء is weakness and fatigue which is the result of doing a thing (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means to say that the process of the creation of new heavens and earth has not ceased. Neither is it an empty and unsubstantiated claim. With the coming of a great Divine Reformer the old order dies and a new one takes its place. This signifies the coming into being of a new heaven and a new earth.

disobedient people shall be
destroyed.**3787A**

3787A. Commentary:

In this verse the Holy Prophet is told that with his advent a new heaven and a new earth would be born. The old decrepit order would die and a new and better one would emerge from its ruins. But before that great and glorious day his own mettle and that of his followers would be put to a severe test. They will have to bear, with patience and fortitude, like great Prophets of God, very great

hardships and privations, and it is after they will come out of the ordeal triumphantly and unscathed that their cause will prevail. That would be a glorious day for believers; and for the disbelievers a time of heart-burning and gnashing of teeth. So severe and swift and overwhelming would be God's punishment that compared to it a whole life spent in comfort and ease would seem but an "hour".

CHAPTER 47

MUḤAMMAD

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation and Context

The *Sūrah* takes its title from its third verse. It is also known as قتال (war) because it devotes a large portion of its text to the subject of war—its causes, ethics and consequences. The fact that the *Sūrah* deals mainly with the fighting which took place after the Holy Prophet had Migrated to Medina and that it makes repeated mention of the hypocrites with whom the Muslims came in contact at that place, lends powerful support to the view held by Baidāwī, Zamakhsharī, Suyūṭī, and others that the *Sūrah* was revealed after the Hijrah—a large part of it having been revealed probably before the Battle of Badr, in the early days of the life at Medina.

Towards the end of the previous *Sūrah*, it was unambiguously and emphatically stated that opposition to the Divine Message, however powerful, organized, and persistent, can never succeed and that Truth must prevail. The subject assumes a certain definiteness in this *Sūrah*, and disbelievers are told that in conformity with the unalterable divine law that Truth must ultimately triumph over falsehood, the Holy Prophet and his followers, though in a weak state in the beginning and though their cause seemingly hopeless, will, after overcoming all difficulties and impediments, succeed in the long run, their weakness progressively giving place to strength.

Subject Matter of the *Sūrah*

The *Sūrah* opens with the challenging statement that all the efforts of disbelievers to retard and arrest the progress of Islam will come to naught and the condition of the Prophet's followers will improve day by day. It then proceeds to say that since disbelievers have drawn the sword against the Prophet they shall perish by the sword. After holding out to Muslims a definite promise of success against their enemies, it briefly lays down important rules of war, as for instance, prisoners can be taken only after regular fighting in which the enemy is decisively beaten (v. 5), but after the war is over, they are to be set free either as an act of favour, or, after taking proper ransom. Thus the *Sūrah*, in a little verse, strikes effectively at the evil practice of slavery.

It is further stated that falsehood, though in a position of strength and power against Truth in the beginning, eventually must suffer defeat. This is a lesson writ large on the pages of history, and the evil fate of peoples nearer home such as 'Ād, Thamūd, Midian and the people of Lot should open the eyes of the Meccans. Next, the *Sūrah* says a few words of comfort and good

cheer to the Holy Prophet, telling him that though he is being hounded out of his native place, friendless and apparently helpless, to seek refuge in a distant place among alien people, yet this very fact will lay the foundation of a great future for his Faith and his followers. His opponents seem to be very powerful but "there have been towns, more powerful than the town which has driven thee out," and yet God destroyed them and so will He destroy the enemies of the Prophet. They are satisfied with having driven him out of Mecca and seem to have a false sense of complacency that thereby they have nipped the tender plant of Islam in the bud, but in fact they have laid the foundation of their own ruin if they could but read the writing on the wall.

Next, the *Sūrah* briefly mentions the aims and objects of war according to Islam. Since it requires very sincere and honest adherence to a cause to imperil one's life, honour, or property for it, war, which puts to test one's sincerity or true adherence to a cause, was enjoined upon Muslims in self-defence so that true and sincere believers might be distinguished from the hypocrites and those weak of faith. Whereas, says the *Sūrah*, the believers welcome a revelation enjoining them to fight in the way of Allah, for it is in fighting that the real mettle of a man is tested, the disbelievers, and the hypocrites feel as if they are being driven to death. Thus true believers are separated and sifted out from those who are insincere or false in the profession of their faith. The *Sūrah* closes with a further exhortation to Muslims to be prepared to spend whatever they possess for the cause they hold so dear, because to be stingy and niggardly when the cause requires its votaries to spend with both hands, is calculated not only to injure the cause but also the individual himself.



(MUHAMMAD)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.³⁷⁸⁸

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bThose who disbelieve and hinder *men* from the way of Allah—He renders their works vain.³⁷⁸⁹

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ①

3. But *as for* those who believe and do good works and believe in that which has been revealed to Muḥammad—and it is the truth from their Lord^c—He removes from them their sins and sets right their affairs.³⁷⁹⁰

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَآمَنُوا
بِمَا نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ
رَبِّهِمْ ② كَفَّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَأَصْلَحَ
بَالَهُمْ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b4:168; 16:89. ^c13:20; 22:55; 34:7.

3788. Commentary:

See 1:1.

3789. Commentary:

Works of disbelievers are rendered vain in that their efforts to arrest the progress of the cause of Truth produce no results. The cause of Truth triumphs and prevails.

3790. Important Words:

بَالَهُمْ (their affairs) is substantive noun from بال (bāla) which means, it (fat) melted or dissolved. البال means, a state, condition or case (12:51). هو في البال means: (1) he is in ample and easy circumstances or condition. (2) A thing or affair to which one devotes his special care. They say ليس هذا من بَالِي i.e. this is not of the things for which I care. (3) The heart or mind. خطر ببالي means, it occurred to me. (4) Attention.

An Arab would say أعطنى بالك i.e. give me thy attention (Lane & Aqrab).

الحق (truth) means, an established fact which is undeniable; a right, equity or justice; a thing that is decreed; a thing suitable to the requirements of justice; truth; wisdom; what is binding; obligatory, just, proper; right; genuine, authentic, real; prudence (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary:

Because belief in the Holy Prophet, as in all Divine Messengers, is included in the words "those who believe and do good works," the expression "and believe in what has been revealed to Muḥammad" seems to be redundant. But nothing in the Quran is redundant or superfluous, the expression serves a definite

4. That is because those who disbelieve follow falsehood while those who believe follow the truth from their Lord. Thus does Allah set forth for men their similitudes.

5. And ^awhen you meet in regular battle those who disbelieve, smite *their* necks; and, when you have overcome them, bind fast the fetters—then afterwards either *release them as a favour* or *by taking ransom*—until the war lays ^{عَلَى الْقُلُوبِ} down its burdens. That is the ordinance. And if Allah had so pleased, He could have punished them *Himself*, but *He has willed* that He may try some of you by others. And those who are killed in the way of Allah—He will never render their works vain.³⁷⁹¹

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْبَاطِلَ
وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ أَمْثَالَهُمْ ①

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبِ
الرِّقَابِ ٭ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَثْخَنْتُمُوهُمْ
فَشُدُّوا الوثَاقَ ٭ فَمِمَّا مَتَّاعِدٌ وَاِمَّا
فِدَاءٌ حَتَّىٰ تَصْعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ٭
ذَٰلِكَ ٭ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَانتَصَرْنَا مِنْهُمْ
وَلَكِنْ لِّيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ ٭ وَالَّذِينَ
قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ
أَعْمَالَهُمْ ②

^a8:46, 68.

purpose. It removes a possible misconception, that belief in God and belief in life after death alone are the two fundamental articles of Faith (2:63). The verse leaves no doubt about the indispensability of belief in the Holy Prophet by saying that what has been revealed to him is الحق i.e. it is the whole truth and nothing but the truth; it agrees with the requirements of justice, truth and wisdom, and fully meets the

exigencies and circumstances of time and the varying human needs, and by it moral lapses of those who believe in him are obliterated, their difficulties removed and their condition progressively bettered.

3791. Important Words:

أَثْخَنْتُمُوهُمْ (you have overcome them).
أَثْن is transitive from ثَن (thakhuna or thakhana) which means, it was or became thick or coarse. أَثْنَهُ means, he

rendered him heavy or languid or enervated; or he overcame him after inflicting many wounds on him. أَثْعَنَ فِي means, he made a great slaughter among the enemy or inflicted heavy wounds upon him. أَثْعَنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ means, he caused much slaughter in the land; or he fought vehemently in the land (Lane & Aqrab).

انْتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ (He would have punished them) is derived from نَصَرَ. They say نَصَرَ اللَّهُ عَلَى عَدُوِّهِ i.e. God helped, aided or assisted him against his enemy or made him victorious. انْتَصَرَ means, he defended himself against his injurer. انْتَصَرَ مِنْهُ means, he exacted his right or due completely from him; he avenged himself upon him; he punished him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse, in a nutshell, lays down some important rules about the ethics of war and its conduct and incidentally deals a death blow to slavery. Briefly these are: (a) When they are engaged in regular battle in the defence of their faith, honour, lives or property, the Muslims are enjoined to fight bravely and relentlessly, giving no quarter, and expecting none from the enemy; and not to flee from the field of battle under lame or weak excuses. They must either win or die. "He who turns his back to the enemy", says the Quran, "draws upon himself the wrath of Allah" (8:13-17). (b) When war is once started, it should continue till peace is established and freedom of conscience secured (8:40). (c) Prisoners are to be taken from the enemy, only after regular and pitched

battle has been fought, and the enemy is decidedly and positively beaten. Thus regular war is declared to be the only reason for taking prisoners for no other cause free men are to be deprived of their liberty. (d) When war is over, prisoners should be released, either as an act of favour, or on taking ransom or by negotiating mutual exchange. They should not be held permanently in captivity or treated as slaves. The Holy Prophet carried this Divine commandment into actual practice by setting at liberty about a hundred families of Banū Muṣṭaliq and several thousand prisoners of Hawāzin after both these tribes had been decisively beaten in battle. It was after the Battle of Badr that ransom was accepted for the prisoners who were set free. This was perhaps, because Islam was then in a very weak state. But, on this occasion too, those of them who could not pay their ransom in money but were literate, were required to teach reading and writing to some of the Muslims. The verse thus has struck very effectively at the roots of slavery, abolishing it completely and forever. (Muir, Zurqānī & Hishām).

The words "And if Allah had so pleased, he could have punished them Himself, but He has willed that He may try some of you by others," signify that God possessed the power to punish the enemies of Truth without the instrumentality of Muslims but He got the latter engaged in fighting with disbelievers so that on the one hand their own good qualities of character should have an opportunity to come into play

6. He will guide them and improve their condition.³⁷⁹²

سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ ⑥

7. And "admit them into the Garden which He has made known to them."³⁷⁹³

وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَفَهَا لَهُمْ ⑦

8. O ye who believe! if you help *the cause of Allah*, He will help you and will make your steps firm.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ

يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ⑧

9. But *as for* those who disbelieve, perdition is their *lot*;

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَتَعْسًا لَهُمْ وَأَصْلٌ

^a3:196; 9:111.

and on the other the bad qualities of disbelievers should become exposed. Perhaps in no other aspect of life was the moral superiority of the Companions of the Holy Prophet so clearly demonstrated as in their treatment of their fallen foes.

The words "And those who are killed in the way of Allah—He will never render their works vain," mean that the sacrifice of Muslims slain in the field of battle would not be wasted. It was their sacrifice that firmly laid the foundation of a bright future for Islam.

3792. Important Words:

Since one of the meanings of هداية is to follow the right path till one reaches one's destination and achieves the object of one's quest (Lane), the verse purports to say that the martyred Muslims have achieved, by their death, the object for which they gave their lives which was to attain God's pleasure and to make Islam secure and strong.

3793. Important Words:

عرف (made known) is transitive verb from عرف ('*arafa*) which means, he knew it or became acquainted with it; he knew it by means of one of the senses and also by mental perception. عرفه الامر ('*arrafa*) means, he acquainted him with the affair. عرف also means, rendering a thing fragrant, and adorning, decorating or embellishing it (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse means that the Muslims slain in the way of Allah will be admitted into gardens of Paradise of which they had a foretaste in the present life. They had a foretaste of them in the sense that they enjoyed in their physical form all those spiritual blessings and favours which are mentioned in the Quran as having been promised to them in the next world. Or the verse may signify that Muslims had a spiritual foretaste of "the Garden" because they saw with their own eyes promises, made to

and He will make their works vain.³⁷⁹⁴

10. That is because they hate what Allah has revealed; so He has made their works futile.³⁷⁹⁵

11. "Have they not travelled in the earth and seen what was the end of those who were before them? Allah utterly destroyed them, and for the disbelievers there will be the like thereof.³⁷⁹⁶

12. That is because ^bAllah is the Protector of those who believe, and as for the disbelievers, there is no protector for them.

أَعْمَالُهُمْ ①

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ

أَعْمَالُهُمْ ②

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا

كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ③

دَمَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ أَمْثَالُهَا ④

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَأَنَّ

الْكَافِرِينَ لَا مَوْلَى لَهُمْ ⑤

^a12:110; 22:47; 30:10; 35:45; 40:22. ^b3:151; 8:41.

them in the Quran about Paradise, being fulfilled in this very life.

3794. Important Words:

تَعَسَّى (perdition) is inf. noun from تَعَسَّى means, he stumbled and fell upon his face; he missed his proof in litigation and the object of his search in seeking; he became far-removed; he became degraded. تَعَسَّاهُ الله means, God destroyed him; degraded him; made him fall on his face. تَعَسَّى لَهُ means, may he fall never to rise; may he perish; may ruin cleave to him or may he be degraded. تَعَسَّى means, ruin, degradation, mischief, evil (Lane & Aqrab).

3795. Commentary:

Three times in the few verses that have gone before it is stated that "God has made the works of

disbelievers vain." This signifies that disbelievers had bent all their energies of mind and body, to the achievement of one supreme desire—to see Islam fail and come to naught. But Islam triumphed. It progressed and prospered and the disbelievers failed to have their desire fulfilled.

3796. Commentary:

As many as fifteen times, the disbelievers of the Holy Prophet have been warned in the Quran to travel in the earth and see the dreadful end to which the disbelievers of former Prophets have come. How can they, the verse warns them, expect to escape a similar fate? The expression أَمْثَالُهَا shows that Divine punishment will overtake disbelievers in various forms and shapes.

R. 2.

13. Verily, Allah will make those who believe and do good works enter the Gardens underneath which rivers flow;^a while those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat even as the cattle eat, and the Fire will be their resort^b.³⁷⁹⁷

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ وَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَهُمْ ۝١٣

14. And how many a township, more powerful than thy town which has driven thee out, have We destroyed, and they had no helper!³⁷⁹⁸

وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ هِيَ أَشَدُّ قُوَّةً مِنْ قَرْيَتِكَ الَّتِي أَخْرَجْتَكَ ۚ أَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ فَلَا نَاصِرَ لَهُمْ ۝١٤

15. Then, 'is he who *takes his stand* upon a clear proof from his Lord like those to whom the evil of their deeds is made to

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۝١٥

^a14:24; 22:24; 29:10. ^b14:31; 15:4; 77:47. ^c11:29.

3797. Commentary:

The believers make use of the things of the world and eat and drink as do the disbelievers, but whereas the former eat to live in order to serve God and man, the latter live to eat, drink, and be merry, and have no nobler objects to pursue. They do not rise above the level of animals as their whole concept of life is materialistic.

3798. Commentary:

The verse constitutes a mighty prophecy. According to the majority of scholarly opinion it was revealed

while the Holy Prophet was on his way from Mecca to Medina, having been driven out of his beloved native place, with a price put on his head. The Prophet was friendless and his cause seemed hopeless. He was hourly in fear of being caught, as Medina was far away and the countryside swarmed with adventurers who sought to bring him dead or alive to get the much-coveted prize. It was at that critical hour that the verse was revealed. It promised a safe journey for the Prophet and the eventual destruction of his enemies.

look beautiful and who follow their evil inclinations?³⁷⁹⁹

16. ^aA description of the Garden promised to the righteous: Therein are rivers of water which corrupts not; and rivers of milk of which the taste changes not; and rivers of wine, a delight to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey. And in it will they have all kinds of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord. Can *those who enjoy such bliss* be like those who abide in the Fire and who are given boiling water to drink so that it tears their bowels?³⁸⁰⁰

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ^ط فِيهَا
 أَنْهَارٌ مِنْ مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ^ج وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ
 لَبَنٍ لَمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ^ه وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ خَمْرٍ
 لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ^ز وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ عَسَلٍ
 مُصَفًّى^ط وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ
 وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ^ط كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ
 فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ
 أَمْعَاءَهُمْ^{١٦}

^a13:36.

3799. Commentary:

The preceding verse promised a bright future for Islam and the ultimate destruction of disbelief, at a time when the Prophet's cause seemed quite hopeless. The verse under comment continues the theme and says that the outcome could not possibly be otherwise as the claim of the Holy Prophet was reinforced and substantiated by incontrovertible heavenly signs while disbelievers had nothing to their credit but wicked deeds and evil desires.

3800. Important Words:

أنهار (rivers) is the plural of نهر which is inf. noun from نهر (nahara) which means, it flowed or flowed with force. نهر means, a river, a brook, a stream.

The word also means, amplitude, or light and amplitude (Lane).

عسل (honey) is inf. noun from عسل means, he prepared the food with honey. They say عسله i.e. he made him an object of eulogy; he made him an object of love to men. عسل means, honey; flowers or blossoms because honey is made therefrom; a good or righteous deed, the eulogy for which a person is deemed sweet (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse mentions four kinds of favours and blessings promised to believers in this and the next life, i.e. rivers of pure water, rivers of milk of which the taste does not change, rivers of wine which gives delight

17. And among them are some who listen to thee till, when they go forth from thy presence, they say to those who have been given knowledge, ‘What has he been talking about just now?’^a Those are they whose hearts Allah has sealed, and who follow their own evil inclinations.³⁸⁰¹

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
خَرَجُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْعِلْمَ مَاذَا قَالَ أَنفَا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ
طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاتَّبَعُوا
أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۝

^a9:93; 16:109; 63:4.

and rivers of clarified honey. The word **أَهْوَاءُ** which has been used four times in the verse, besides other senses, signifies light and amplitude; and **عَسَل** among other things, means a good or righteous deed which wins for the doer the love and esteem of men. In view of the signification of these two words the verse may mean that the four things mentioned will be given to the righteous in plenty: viz. water which is the source of all life (21:31); milk which, besides giving health and vigour to the body, stands for spiritual knowledge; wine which gives pleasant sensations and forgetfulness of worries; and honey, being the means of curing many a disease, represents good and righteous deeds which make the believers beloved of men. Taken in the physical sense, i.e. pertaining to the present life, the verse would signify that in the present life the believers will have in plenty all those things which make life pleasant, delightful and useful; and taken symbolically and in a spiritual sense, it would mean that believers will

have a full life, they will be endowed with spiritual knowledge, will drink the wine of God’s love and will do deeds that will win for them love and esteem of men.

3801. Commentary:

As the principal subject of the *Sūrah* is war, it naturally deals with three categories of men, viz. true believers, firm disbelievers and the hypocrites who vacillate between faith and disbelief. The verse under comment deals with the third category of men.

The expression **مَاذَا قَالَ أَنفَا** has a twofold meaning. A hypocrite being a double-faced person generally uses language susceptible of double meaning. This he does in order to extricate himself from an awkward position, wherein, should one construction of his speech land him in trouble, he might be able to avoid that consequence by putting quite a different construction on it. The above expression is an appropriate instance of the equivocal language used by the hypocrites of Medina. If

18. But as for those who follow guidance, ^aHe adds to their guidance, and bestows on them righteousness *suited to their condition*.³⁸⁰²

وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ ۝١٨

19. They wait not but for the Hour, that it should come upon them suddenly. ^bThe signs thereof have already come. But of what *avail* will their admonition be to them when it has *actually* come upon them?³⁸⁰³

فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَقَدْ جَاءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا فَأَنَّى لَهُمْ إِذَا جَاءَهُمْ ذِكْرُهَا ۝١٩

20. Know, therefore, that there is no God other than Allah, and

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ

^a8:3; 9:124; 18:14. ^b22:56; 43:67.

one of them, after a meeting with the Prophet, happened to meet a Muslim, he would say "What was it that he said just now," meaning, what beautiful and highly useful things had the Prophet said. But if he chanced to meet a hypocrite like himself he would use the same expression but meaning "what non sense talk had the Prophet indulged in."

3802. Commentary:

The expression *آتاهم تقواهم* may mean: (a) God made them righteous; (b) He disclosed to them the ways and means by employing which they could attain *تقوى* (c) Allah bestowed upon believers favours and blessings which are the result of a life of righteousness.

3803. Important Words:

أشراط (signs) is the plural of *شرط*.

They say *شرط عليه بكذا* i.e. he imposed upon him such a condition. *أشراط نفسه لكذا* means, he marked himself for such an affair. *شرط* means, a sign, token or mark. *أشراط الناس* means, the best or meanest of men (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Disbelievers are so obstinate in rejecting the Divine Message that they would not listen to any argument but would continue to insist that the threatened punishment should come soon. But, the verse purports to say, the signs of their destruction have already appeared if they but read them. When, however, punishment would actually arrive, their repentance would be of no avail. Why don't they then take heed before it is too late? The reference in the word *أشراط* (signs) seems to be to the Holy Prophet's flight from Mecca which

ask protection for thy frailties, and for believing men and believing women. And Allah knows the place where you move about and the place where you stay. **3804**

R. 3.

21. And those who believe say, 'Why is not a *Sūrah* revealed?' But when a decisive *Sūrah* is revealed and fighting is mentioned therein, thou seest those in whose hearts is a disease, looking towards thee with the look of one in a death-faint. So ruin seize them! **3805**

22. Obedience and ^areasonable speech *is proper for them*. And when the matter is determined upon, it is good for them if they were true to Allah. **3806**

لَذُنُوبِكَ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ط
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ ع ٢٤

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ
فَإِذَا أُنْزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مَّحْكَمَةٌ وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا
الْقِتَالُ لَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
مَّرَضٌ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ نَظَرَ الْمَغْشِيِّ
عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ ط فَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ ج ٢٥

طَاعَةً وَقَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ ق فَإِذَا عَزَمَ
الْأَمْرُ ق فَلََوْ صَدَقُوا اللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا
لَّهُمْ ج ٢٦

^a2:264.

proved to be the prelude to the appearance of many signs.

3804. Commentary:

For the meaning and significance of the expression لَذُنُوبِكَ see a detailed note on 40:56 & 48:3. The words متقلبكم و مثواكم may mean, when you move about transacting your affairs and when you take rest, or متقلبكم may apply to this world and مثواكم to the next.

3805. Important Words:

أولى (ruin) is derived from ولي and means, nearer; more deserving; more competent; more fit. The expression أولى لك is used to give warning, and

means mischief or trouble has approached near thee, so be on your guard. The expression also means, woe to thee; woe be thy lot (Aqrah).

Commentary:

The verse means to say that whereas true believers avidly wait for a verse to be revealed which should embody a Divine commandment directing them to fight in the way of Allah, "those in whose heart is a disease," shudder at the very idea of being invited to fight.

3806. Important Words:

صدقوا الله (were true to Allah). صدق

23. Would you then, if you are placed in authority, create disorder in the land and sever your ties of kinship?³⁸⁰⁷

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَتُقْطِعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ ۖ

24. It is these whom Allah curses so that He makes them deaf and makes their eyes blind.

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ
وَأَعَمَّى أَبْصَارَهُمْ ۖ

25. "Will they not, then, ponder over the Quran, or is it that on the hearts are their locks?³⁸⁰⁸

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ
أَفْئَالُهُا ۖ

26. Surely, ^bthose who turn their backs after guidance has become manifest to them, Satan has seduced them, and holds out false hopes to them.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ارْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ
مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَّلَ
لَهُمْ ۖ وَأَمْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ۖ

27. That is because they said to those who hate what Allah has

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا مَا نَزَّلَ

^a4:83. ^b2:218; 3:87; 5:55.

means, he told or spoke the truth. صدق في القتال means, he fought well; he gave a good account of himself in the fight. صدق اللقاء means, he was firm in fight صدق الصبح means, the dawn shone clearly. صدقني وعده means, he fulfilled, or he was true to his promise with me. The Quranic expression صدقوا ما عاهدوا الله عليه (33:24) means, they were true to their covenant with Allah and fulfilled it (Lane & Aqrab).

3807. Commentary:

The verse signifies that believers have been allowed to fight because if the power of disbelievers had not been broken, they would have created disorder in the land and would have

severed all ties of kinship and trampled underfoot all rightful claims. The verse also signifies that if believers refused to fight the disbelievers now, Arabia would continue to suffer from disruption and disintegration and forces of evil would stalk the land.

3808. Commentary:

This verse constitutes an enlargement of the one preceding it. It purports to say that it is because disbelievers do not ponder over the Quran and do not try to understand and realise the real purpose of Islamic wars that they lose their spiritual sight and hearing and begin to find fault with the Quranic commandments about war.

revealed, 'We will obey you in some matters;' and Allah knows their secrets.³⁸⁰⁹

اللَّهُ سَتِيعُكُمْ فِي بَعْضِ الْأَمْرِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِسْرَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٧﴾

28. But how will they fare when the angels will cause them to die^a, smiting their faces and their backs?

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يُضْرِبُونَ
وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٨﴾

29. This is because they followed that which displeased Allah, and disliked the seeking of His pleasure. So He rendered their works vain.

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اتَّبَعُوا مَا آسَخَطَ اللَّهُ
وَكَرِهُوا رِضْوَانَهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٢٩﴾

R. 4.

30. Do those in whose hearts is a disease suppose that Allah will not bring to light their malice?³⁸¹⁰

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ أَن
لَنْ يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ أَضْغَانَهُمْ ﴿٣٠﴾

31. And if We pleased, We could show them to thee so that thou shouldst know them by their marks. And thou shalt surely recognize them by the

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَاكَهُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُمْ
بِسِيمِهِمْ ۖ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣١﴾

^a4:98; 8:51; 16:29.

3809. Commentary:

The reference in the words, "those who hate what Allah has revealed," is to disbelievers who never liked that any good should be sent down to the Faithful from their Lord (2:106). The hypocrites would not side with disbelievers openly and unreservedly. A hypocrite is too wily a person to burn his boats. He faces both ways. But, says the verse, God would expose their double-facedness. This is

the significance of the words "Allah knows their secrets."

3810. Important Words:

أَضْغَانُهُم (their malice) is the plural of ضَغْنٌ (*dighnun*) which is inf. noun from ضَغِنَ (*daghana*). ضَغِنَ عَلَيْهِ means, he was or became affected with rancour, malice or spite against him. ضَغْنٌ means, rancour, malice, spite; violent hatred, enmity; desire or yearning or longing of the soul, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

tone of *their* speech. And Allah knows your deeds.³⁸¹¹

32. And We will surely try you until We distinguish those among you who strive *for the cause of God* and those who are steadfast^a. And We will make known the facts about you.³⁸¹²

وَتَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ الْمُجْهِدِينَ
مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ ۖ وَتَبْلُوَ أَخْبَارَكُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾

^a3:141-143; 29:4, 12.

3811. Important Words:

لحن (tone) is inf. noun from لحن (Laḥana). They say لحن له i.e. he said to him something which he (the latter) understood but which was unintelligible to others; he intimated to him something which he alone understood; he spoke obliquely or ambiguously. لحن means, the meaning of speech; its intended sense or import; its intent (it is direct and also indirect); an oblique or ambiguous mode of speech; an inclining of speech to obliqueness, or ambiguity, and equivocal allusion (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

A hypocrite faces both ways. He never talks straight and always indulges in ambiguous and equivocal speech so that it conveys one sense to one person and quite another sense to another person. It is to this crooked manner of speech of the hypocrites that reference has also been made in 2:105.

3812. Important Words:

نعلم (We distinguish). علمه means; he knew it; he became acquainted with it. It is syn. with عرفه but علم ('ilm) is

wider and more general in signification than عرف and means, he knew it intuitively and inferentially (i.e. تيقن). They say علم عبدالله من عمر i.e. that I may distinguish 'Abdullāh from 'Umar. The root meaning of علم ('ilm) is that of a mark or sign by which one thing is distinguished from another (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2:144 and 3:141.

تبلو (make known) is derived from بلا. They say ابتلاه or أبلاه or بلاه i.e. He (God) tested him with good or evil; he knew it or became acquainted with it; he informed him or acquainted him with it; he manifested it; he revealed it (Lane & Aqrab).

أخباركم (facts about you), أخبار is the plural of خبر which means, a piece of information; an announcement; an account; a man's case or state, etc. The difference between خبر and نبأ is that while the former word means, an ordinary news, the latter signifies a news or announcement or information of great import and significance (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Taking into consideration the root-meanings of the words بلا and خبر and

33. Those who disbelieve and hinder men from the way of Allah and ^aoppose the Messenger after guidance has become manifest to them, shall not harm Allah in the least; and He will make their works fruitless.

34. O ye who believe! Obey Allah and Obey the Messenger and let not your works go vain.

35. ^bVerily, those who disbelieve and hinder *men* from the way of Allah, *and* then die while they are disbelievers—Allah certainly will not forgive them.

36. So ^cbe not slack and sue not for peace; for you will *certainly* have the upper hand. And Allah is with you, and He will not deprive you of *the reward of your actions*.³⁸¹³

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَشَاقُّوا الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ
الْهُدَىٰ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيُحِطُّ
أَعْمَالُهُمْ ۝٣٣

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا
الرَّسُولَ وَلَا تَبْطُلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ ۝٣٤

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
ثُمَّ مَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ
لَهُمْ ۝٣٥

فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى السَّلَامِ ۚ وَأَنْتُمْ
الْأَعْلَوْنَ ۚ وَاللَّهُ مَعَكُمْ وَلَنْ يَتَرَكَكُمْ
أَعْمَالَكُمْ ۝٣٦

^a8:14; 59:5. ^b3:92; 4:19. ^c3:140.

علم the verse would signify that God makes believers pass through travails, trials and tribulations and He has enjoined fighting on them that sincere believers may become distinguished from the hypocrites and that the qualities of head and heart of believers and also the results of their steadfastness and fortitude amidst hardships and privations may have an opportunity to come into actual play.

It may also be noted that

knowledge (علم) is of two kinds: (a) knowledge about a thing before its occurrence; and (b) knowledge about it after it has actually happened. Knowledge referred to in the verse under comment belongs to the latter category.

3813. Important Words:

يَتَرَكَ (will not deprive you). يتر is derived from وتره. They say وتره حقه i.e. he made him to suffer loss or detriment in respect of his right; or he

37. "The life of *this* world is but a sport and a pastime, and if you believe and be righteous, He will give you your rewards, and will not ask of you your possessions.³⁸¹⁴

38. If He ask them of you, and press you, you would be niggardly, and He would bring to light your malice.³⁸¹⁵

إِنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَإِنْ
تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا يُؤْتِكُمْ أَجُورَكُمْ
وَلَا يَسْأَلْكُمْ أَمْوَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٧﴾

إِنْ يَسْأَلْكُمْ مَوَالِيهَا فَيُخْفِكُمْ تَبْخَلُوا
وَيُخْرِجْ أَضْغَانَكُمْ ﴿٣٨﴾

^a6:33; 29:65; 57:21.

deprived him or defrauded him of it partially or wholly (Aqrah).

Commentary:

As the *Sūrah* primarily deals with the subject of war, the Muslims are enjoined here that when once the fighting has started, they are not to sue for peace, whatever form or shape the fortunes of war may take. They are to win either victory or martyrdom. The verse, besides laying this heavy responsibility on Muslims, makes to them an unequivocal promise of victory in the words "You will certainly have the upper hand as Allah is with you." But whereas, on the one hand, Muslims are not to sue for peace under any circumstances, on the other, they are not to reject overtures of peace made by the enemy even if by doing so he seeks to deceive Muslims or to gain time (8:62). Islam is a religion of peace. It has certainly permitted its followers to take up arms in self-defence, or, when refusal to fight means sure destruction. But it has also enjoined them to cease fighting, whatever the

circumstances, when an offer of peace is made by the opposite side.

3814. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that as Muslims have been enjoined to fight in the cause of God, they will have to bear the expenses of war and for this purpose they will have to make sacrifices of life and money. But God does not need their money. It is for their own benefit that sacrifices of life and money are demanded of them because no success is possible without such sacrifices. True believers must understand and realise this supreme lesson.

3815. Commentary:

The verse applies to hypocrites. Though professing to be Muslims, they will not spend their money in the cause of Islam, however pressing its need might be, because their hearts are full of rancour, malice and spite against it. But whatever they may or may not do, Islam will be victorious and their rancour and malevolence would be exposed.

39. Behold, you are those who are called upon to spend in the way of Allah; but of you there are some who are niggardly. And whoso is niggardly, is niggardly only against his own soul. And Allah is Self-Sufficient^a, and it is you that are needy. ^bAnd if you turn your backs, He will bring in your stead a people other than you, then they will not be like you.³⁸¹⁶

هَآأَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تُدْعُونَ لِنُفْقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَبْخُلُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَبْخُلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخُلْ عَنِ نَفْسِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ الْغَنِيُّ ۚ وَأَنْتُمْ الْفُقَرَاءُ ۚ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ۚ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَالَكُمْ ۝

^a35:16. ^b5:55.

3816. Commentary:

The address in this verse is of general application. Miserliness is a deadly moral disease that eats into the vitals of man's moral and spiritual well-being. Elsewhere the Quran has used very strong language about misers or niggardly people (9:35).

When the Holy Prophet was once asked as to whom the words, "He will bring instead a people other than you," referred, he is reported to have said, "If Faith were to go up to the Pleiades, a man of Persian descent will bring it back to the earth" (Rūḥul-Ma'ānī).

CHAPTER 48

AL-FATH

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

According to consensus of scholarly opinion the *Sūrah* was revealed when, after signing the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah, the Holy Prophet was on his way back to Medina, in the 6th year of Hijrah in the month of Dhul-Qa‘dah (Bukhārī). The Treaty being an epoch-making event, all incidents connected with it have been carefully preserved in Islamic history. So complete agreement exists concerning the date and place of the revelation of this *Sūrah*. The *Sūrah* is entitled Al-Fath (the Victory). The title is appropriate in that a seemingly diplomatic defeat eventually proved to be a master stroke of strategy and led to the Fall of Mecca, and consequently the conquest of the whole of Arabia. The *Sūrah* further, referring by implication to the Fall of the Roman and Persian Empires, embodies a prophecy about the eventual triumph of Islam over all the religions of the world.

Towards the close of the preceding *Sūrah*, believers were given definite promise of victory over their opponents. The present *Sūrah* declares in clear and unequivocal terms that the promised victory is not a thing of some indefinite distant future, but is near at hand. It is so near that it may be said to have actually arrived, and it will be so decisive and overwhelming that even the most skeptic will find it hard to deny.

Summary of Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with a firm and unequivocal declaration that the promised victory has actually arrived and that it would be clear, definite, and overwhelming. The Holy Prophet is told that as a result of the victory people will join the fold of Islam in such large numbers that it would prove a formidable task for him adequately to train and educate the new converts in the tenets and principles of Islam. He should therefore implore God’s assistance in the discharge of his onerous duty, and ask for His forgiveness and mercy lest, due to human limitations, some defects should remain in its full execution.

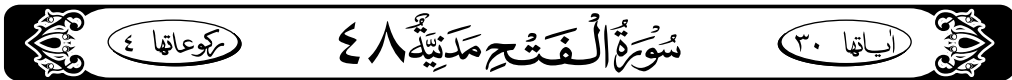
The *Sūrah* proceeds to say that because of lack of proper realization of the import of the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah the believers were downcast. God would send down solace and tranquillity on them and their faith would increase, while the false satisfaction and delight of disbelievers would be short-lived. The believers are further told that they should not have doubted the wisdom of the Prophet’s action in signing the Treaty since he was God’s

Messenger and all his actions were done under His direction and guidance. Their duty was "to believe in him, help him, and honour him".

Further, the *Sūrah* says that believers earned the pleasure of God when they swore allegiance to the Prophet under "the tree" that they would stand by him through thick and thin, even unto death. It was God's own plan that fighting did not take place because in Mecca there lived true and sincere Muslims whom believers did not know, and some of whom would have unwittingly been killed, though disbelievers also would certainly have suffered a crushing defeat, since it is God's unalterable law that disbelief should suffer defeat when it is face to face with belief.

Next, the hypocrites and the laggards-behind receive a severe rebuke and their hypocrisy is exposed. Whenever they are invited to fight in the cause of God, the *Sūrah* says, they invent false excuses to justify their tarrying behind, but by their foolish subterfuges they deceive no one but themselves, and their false excuses would not save them from Divine punishment that is in store for them.

Towards the close, the *Sūrah* reverts to the subject that not only would the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah prove a great victory but other victories would also follow in its wake, and the neighbouring countries would fall to the victorious arms of Muslims, because it is decreed in the heavens that Islam, being the last Divine Message, should prevail over all religions and mankind should worship one God and follow one Prophet.



(AL-FATH)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. **3816A**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Verily, We have granted thee a clear victory, **3817**

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُبِينًا ②

^aSee 1:1.

3816A. Commentary:

See 1:1.

3817. Commentary:

The reference in the words "a clear victory" seems to be to the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah. It is remarkable that though, during the previous brief six years of his life at Medina, the Holy Prophet had gained great victories over his enemies which had crippled and crushed their fighting power, yet none of them is called "a clear victory" in the Quran. It was reserved for the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah to receive this single honour, in spite of the fact that its terms were seemingly so humiliating that the Muslims were greatly perturbed over this apparently rude rebuff to the prestige of Islam, and even a stalwart like 'Umar exclaimed in extreme grief and indignation that had the terms been settled by any other person than the Holy Prophet, he would have scorned to listen to them (Hishām). The Treaty was indeed a great victory in that it opened the way to the expansion and spread of Islam and led to the Fall of Mecca and ultimately to the conquest of the whole of Arabia. It proved to be a

master stroke of strategy as the Holy Prophet's "political status as an equal and independent power was acknowledged by the Quraish" (Mohammad at Medina by Montgomery Watt).

As the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah constitutes a great landmark in the early history of Islam and as it forms the principal topic dealt with in the *Sūrah* under comment, it needs to be treated at some length.

The Holy Prophet had seen a vision that he was making a circuit of the Ka'bah along with a party of his followers. In fulfilment of his vision, the Prophet started for Mecca with about 1500 Muslims to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage in 6 A.H., in the month of Dhul-Qa'dah, one of the four sacred months in which, according to Arab tradition and usage, fighting was forbidden, even before Islam. When he reached 'Usfān, a place a few miles distant from Mecca, he was informed by an advance party whom he had sent under the command of 'Abbād bin Bishar that the Quraish were bent upon barring his entry into Mecca. In order to avoid an armed clash the Prophet changed his route and "after a

fatiguing march through devious and rugged pathways reached Ḥudai-biyyah," where he encamped. The Prophet had declared that he would accept all the demands of the Quraish for the honour of the Holy Place (Hishām), but the Quraish were firmly resolved not to allow him to enter Mecca, whatever he might say or do. Messages were exchanged in an attempt to find a solution to the impasse. After heated and protracted parleys in which the Holy Prophet left no stone unturned, even at the cost of his prestige, to arrive at a reasonable compromise with the Quraish, a treaty was signed of which the terms were:

War shall be suspended for ten years. Whosoever would like to join the Holy Prophet or enter into treaty with him, shall have liberty to do so. The same will apply to whosoever would like to join the Quraish or enter into treaty with them. If a believing man goes over to the Prophet from Mecca without the permission of his guardian, he shall be sent back to his guardian; but should any of the followers of the Prophet return to the Quraish, they shall not be sent back. The Prophet shall retire this year without entering the city. Next year he and his Companions may visit Mecca only for three days to perform *عمرة* (Lesser Pilgrimage), but they shall carry no arms save sheathed swords (Bukhārī, Hishām & Muir).

The terms of the Treaty were demonstrably very humiliating. The Muslims were greatly upset. No

words could adequately describe their grief, and sense of humiliation and injured pride. The third term was particularly galling. But the Holy Prophet was quite calm and tranquil. Being convinced of the moral force of Islam, he knew that "a believer who had once tasted the sweetness of faith would prefer to be cast into fire than to revert to disbelief" (Bukhārī), and that he would be a source of strength to his religion and other believers wherever he might happen to be. The case of Abū Baṣīr, and that of Abū Jandal and their associates fully justified his conviction. He wanted to have a peaceful atmosphere. He knew that a peaceful soil was most congenial for the spread of Islam, and Islam did spread very rapidly after the signing of the Treaty of Ḥudai-biyyah. When as a result of violation by the Quraish of the terms of the Treaty, the Prophet marched on Mecca two years later, ten thousand faithful Companions were under his command, instead of the paltry 1500 who were with him on the occasion of the signing of the Treaty. Thus the Treaty and its aftermath gave in advance the direct lie to the false and foolish propaganda that was to be conducted by Christian missionaries in our own time, that Islam was propagated by the sword.

One immediate effect of the Treaty was that the tribes of Banū Khuzā‘ah entered into an alliance with the Holy Prophet, while the Banū Bakar sided with the Quraish, an incident which later on led to the march on Mecca. The Treaty did indeed prove to be "a clear victory." The Companions of the

3. That Allah may cover up for thee thy shortcomings, past and future, and that He may complete His favour upon thee, and may guide thee on a right path;³⁸¹⁸

يَغْفِرْ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا
تَأَخَّرَ وَيُتِمِّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيكَ
صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ۝

Holy Prophet were rightly proud of being present on the occasion, and quite justified in regarding the signing of the Treaty, and not the conquest of Mecca as "the victory referred to in the present verse" (Bukhārī). According to them no victory was greater and more far-reaching in its results and effects than this Treaty (Hishām). And the Holy Prophet himself called it a victory (Baihaqī as quoted by Zurqānī).

3818. Important Words:

ليغفر (that He may cover up). They say غفر المتاع i.e. he put the goods into the bag and covered and protected them. مغفر and غفران both infinitive nouns mean, protection and preservation. مغفر means, helmet and غفارة means, cloth worn beneath the veil to keep it clean (Lane, Mufradāt & Aqrab). See also 2:59; 14:42 & 40:56.

ذنب (thy shortcomings). ذنبه means, he followed his trail, not quitting his track. ذنب therefore, signifies such natural failings or frailties as adhere to human nature. أذنب means, he committed a sin, a crime, a misdemeanour, fault, etc. According to Imām Rāghib ذنب means, such errors and mistakes as bring about a harmful result. It differs from اثم in being either intentional or committed

through inadvertence while اثم is peculiarly intentional (Lane). See also 3:17.

Commentary:

The verse has been deliberately misrepresented, or, through lack of knowledge of Arabic idiom and phrase, misinterpreted, by Christian missionaries as signifying that the Holy Prophet was guilty of some moral lapses. But it bears no such construction. It is an article of faith with Muslims, as enjoined by the Quran that God's Prophets are born sinless and they remain sinless throughout their lives. They are incapable of saying or doing anything contrary to Divine commandments (21:28). As they are commissioned by God to purge men of sins, they cannot themselves commit sins. And of Divine Messengers the Holy Prophet was the noblest and the purest. The Quran abounds in verses which speak in glowing terms of the purity and spotlessness of his life. Here are a few of them:

- (a) Say, if you love Allah, follow me; then will Allah love you (3:32). (b) Verily, Allah has conferred a favour on the believers by raising among them a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them

His signs, and purifies them and teaches them the Book and wisdom (3:165). (c) Say, my Prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds (6:163). (d) Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet, the Immaculate (sinless) One...(7:158). (e) O ye who believe! respond to Allah, and the Messenger when he (the Messenger) calls you that he may give you life (8:25). (f) Verily, you have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent model (33:22). (g) Verily, those who swear allegiance to thee, indeed, swear allegiance to Allah (48:11). (h) Your Companion has neither erred, nor has he gone astray, nor does he speak out of his own desire (53:3-4). (i) And thou dost surely possess very high moral excellences (68:5). (j) A noble Messenger, possessor of power, established in the presence of the Lord of the Throne, one who should be obeyed and who is faithful to his trust (81:20-22).

A man of such high moral stature, as the Holy Prophet, who raised a whole people sunk into the lowest depths of moral turpitude to the highest pinnacles of spiritual eminence, could not possibly be guilty of such moral lapses as his detractors seek to impute to him.

A quite simple and harmless word—ذنب—is taken advantage of to malign him. The word, among other things, signifies such frailties as adhere to human nature, and errors as are calculated to bring about harmful

results. In this sense of the word the verse signifies that God would protect the Holy Prophet from the harmful results that would follow in the wake of the promised victory referred to in the preceding verse, inasmuch as, large masses of people would enter the fold of Islam, and naturally their moral and spiritual training and upbringing would not be of the desired standard. That is why wherever in the Quran success and victories are promised to the Holy Prophet, he is enjoined to seek protection of God from his ذنب i.e. human weakness which might stand in the way of the realization of his great mission which is the spread and expansion of Islam and the creation of a disciplined community of high morals. The fact that of the four words ذنب and اثم and جرم and جناح, which possess almost similar connotations, the first three have not been used in the Quran with regard to Prophets of God, shows that ذنب does not possess the sinister meaning which the other three words possess. Besides, according to the Quranic idiom, the expression ذنبك, if at all ذنب be taken to signify a sin or crime, would mean "the sins attributed to thee or alleged to have been committed by thee or the sins committed against thee." Elsewhere in the Quran (5:30) a similar expression اثمى (my sin) means, the sin committed against me. Thus the verse under comment means that as a result of the great victory, i.e. the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, all the sins and crimes and faults which his enemies imputed to the Holy Prophet, viz. that he was a cheat, an impostor or forger of lies

4. And that Allah may help thee with a mighty help.³⁸¹⁹

5. He it is Who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers^a that they might add faith to their faith—^band to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is All-knowing, Wise—³⁸²⁰

وَيَنْصُرَكَ اللَّهُ نَصْرًا عَزِيزًا ۝

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ۖ وَاللَّهُ جُودُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

^a9:26. ^b33:10; 74:32.

against God and man, etc., would prove to be false, inasmuch as all sorts of people by coming into contact with Muslims would find out the truth about him. Moreover, the context also supports this meaning because grant of a clear victory and the completion of Divine favour upon the Holy Prophet, referred to in this and the preceding verse do not seem to possess any relevance to the forgiveness of sins, if ذنب be taken to mean a sin. And the expression كى may also mean "for thy sake".

The words "past and present" signify that the charges that have been levelled against the Holy Prophet in the past by the Quraish and those that will be levelled against him in future by his enemies, will all be dispelled and he will stand completely vindicated. The words seem to embody a great prophecy that in some future time the Holy Prophet will be misrepresented and misunderstood but that all misunderstandings will eventually be dissipated and Islam will shine forth in full glory, and its superiority will be established over all rival Faiths.

3819. Commentary:

Allah's help came in the form of the rapid spread of Islam in Arabia after the signing of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, and the Holy Prophet was acknowledged as the Head of an independent sovereign State.

3820. Commentary:

Twice, in this *Sūrah* has the statement been made that "God sent down tranquillity upon the believers" (see v. 27) and twice the declaration that "to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth." These expressions show that though, due to a misunderstanding about the terms of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, the believers were temporarily perturbed, they never lost peace of mind so far as fighting in the cause of Allah was concerned, and were fully convinced that divine hosts were with them. That is why when a false news reached Hudaibiyyah that 'Uthmān, the Prophet's envoy to the Meccans, had been killed, and the Prophet invited Muslims to take a solemn oath at his hand that they would

6. That He may make the believing men and the believing women enter the Gardens beneath which streams flow, wherein they will abide, and *that* ^aHe may remove their evils from them—and that, in the sight of Allah, is the supreme triumph—

لِيُدْخِلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَيُكَفِّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ ^ط وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ^ل

7. And *that* He may punish the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women^b, and the idolatrous men and the idolatrous women, who entertain evil thoughts concerning Allah. ^cOn them *shall fall* an evil calamity; and the wrath of Allah is upon them. And He has cursed them, and has prepared Hell for them. And that indeed is an evil destination.³⁸²¹

وَيُعَذِّبُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ
وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكَاتِ الظَّالِمِينَ
بِاللَّهِ ظُلٌّ السَّوْءِ ^ط عَلَيْهِمْ دَآئِرَةُ السَّوْءِ ^ج
وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَأَعَدَّ
لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ ^ط وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ^و

^a8:30; 64:10; 66:9. ^b33:25. ^c9:98.

avenge the death of ‘Uthmān and would fight under his banner to the bitter end, all of them took the oath without evincing the least hesitation.

3821. Important Words:

دائرة (calamity) is derived from دار which means, it (an event) came about. دار الدهر means, the time took a turn; it changed. دار بينهم الكأس means, the wine-cup went round them. دائرة means, the circuit of a thing; an evil turn of fortune; calamity; defeat; rout; slaughter; death. دامت عليهم الدوائر means,

calamities befell them (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that every turn of fortune adds to the faith of believers and any addition to faith of believers increases the heart-burning and jealousy of disbelievers and the hypocrites. The latter had entertained the false hope that the terms of the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah would bring about a weakening of faith among the believers but the opposite happened and this caused heart-

8. ^aAnd to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.³⁸²²

9. We have sent thee as a witness and ^ba bearer of glad tidings and a Warner,^{3822A}

10. That you should believe in Allah and His Messenger, and may help him, and honour him^c, and *that* you may glorify Him morning and evening.

11. Verily, those who swear allegiance to thee indeed swear allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is over their hands. So whoever breaks *his oath*, breaks *it* to his own loss; and whoever fulfils the covenant that he has made with Allah, He will surely give him a great reward.³⁸²³

وَاللَّهُ جُنُودُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ^طوَكَانَ
اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ⑧

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَ مُبَشِّرًا
وَنَذِيرًا ⑨

لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ
وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ ^ط وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً
وَآصِيلًا ⑩

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ ^ط
يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ^ج فَمَنْ نَكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا
يَنْكُثُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ ^ج وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِمَا عَاهَدَ
عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ فَسَيُؤْتِيَهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ⑪ ⑫

^aSee 48:5. ^b25:57; 33:46; 35:25. ^c5:13.

burning among them.

3822. Commentary:

The verse warns disbelievers and hypocrites that all their evil thoughts and designs against believers would do the latter no harm, because Allah is with them and His hosts are at their back.

3822A. Commentary:

The verse refers to three attributes of the Holy Prophet. He was شاهد i.e. his whole life constituted a standing testimony to the existence of the Almighty God Who gave him success

against very heavy odds. He was مبشر because he gave believers the glad tidings of bliss and benediction in this life as well as in the life to come, and he was نذير (Warner) for those who rejected his Message.

3823. Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to the oath taken by the believers at the hands of the Holy Prophet under a tree at Hudaibiyyah when a rumour reached him that 'Uthmān, his special envoy, had been killed by the Meccans. The believers were asked to

R. 2.

12. Those of the desert Arabs, who *contrived to be* left behind, will say to thee, ^a“Our possessions and our families kept us occupied, so ask forgiveness for us.” ^bThey say with their tongues that which is not in their hearts. Say, ^c“Who can avail you aught against Allah, if He intends you some harm, or if He intends you some benefit? Nay, Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.”³⁸²⁴

13. ‘Nay, you thought that the Messenger and the believers would never come back to their families, and that was made to *appear* pleasing to your hearts, and you thought an evil thought, and you were a ruined people.’³⁸²⁵

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ
شَغَلَتْنَا أَمْوَالُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا فَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا
يَقُولُونَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا
إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا
بَلْ كَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ۝

بَلْ ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ لَّنْ يَنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُولُ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا وَزَيَّنَ ذَلِكَ
فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَظَنَنْتُمْ ظَنًّا سَوْءًا
وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا بُورًا ۝

^a102:2. ^b3:168. ^c13:17; 25:4.

declare on solemn oath that they would stand by the Holy Prophet at all costs and would fight under his banner to the bitter end.

3824. Commentary:

Reference in this verse is to those Bedouin tribes around Medina who apparently had friendly relations with the Muslims. These tribes were also invited to join the party of 1500 Muslims who were going to Mecca to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage (عمرة). Though the Prophet was going on a mission of peace, these desert tribes thought that the Quraish would not

allow his entry into Mecca and that in all likelihood there would be a clash of arms and Muslims not being properly armed would be defeated, and therefore going with the Holy Prophet was tantamount to marching into the jaws of death (Muir, Hishām & Kathīr). The verse may equally apply to those tribes who had remained behind in the expedition to Tabūk because analogous words have been used in *Sūrah At-Taubah* about them.

3825. Commentary:

Wish being father to the thought, the hypocrites, whenever invited by

14. And *as for* those who believe not in Allah and His Messenger—^aWe have surely prepared for the disbelievers a blazing fire.

15. ^bAnd to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. ^cHe forgives whom He pleases, and punishes whom He pleases. And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.

16. Those who *contrived to be* left behind will say, when you go forth to the spoils to take them, 'Let us follow you.' They seek to change the decree of Allah. Say, 'You shall not follow us. Thus has Allah said beforehand.' Then they will say, 'Nay, but you envy us.' Not so, *in fact* they understand not except a little. **3826**

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَأَإِنَّا
أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَعِيرًا ۝١٤

وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ يَعْفِرُ
لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝١٥

سَيَقُولُ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ إِذَا انْطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَى
مَغَائِمٍ لِّيَأْخُذُواهَا ذَرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ ۚ
يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُبَدِّلُوا كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ۖ قُلْ لَنْ
تَتَّبِعُونَا كَذَلِكُمْ قَالَ اللَّهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ
فَسَيَقُولُونَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُونَنَا ۖ بَلْ كَانُوا
لَا يَفْقَهُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝١٦

^a18:103; 29:69; 33:9; 76:5. ^b40:17. ^c3:130; 5:19.

the Prophet to join him in an expedition, entertained the fond hope that Muslims being very weak would never come back safe to their families. Therefore, on one pretext or another, they requested to be excused. But their wishful thinking, says the verse, always ended in frustration and severe disappointment, and the Muslims returned successful from almost every expedition.

3826. Commentary:

The reference in the words, "When

you go forth to the spoils that you take them," is to the booty which fell into the hands of Muslims in the Khaibar expedition. The *Sūrah* under comment was revealed to the Prophet when he was on his way back from Hudaibiyyah. In v. 20, the Muslims have been promised great spoils. It is to these spoils that the present verse refers. Having returned from Hudaibiyyah, the Prophet, after a short stay at Medina, marched against the Jews of Khaibar to punish them

17. Say to the desert Arabs who *contrived to be left behind*, 'You shall be called to *fight* against a people of mighty valour; you shall fight them until they surrender. Then, if you obey, Allah will give you a good reward, but if you turn your backs, as you turned your backs before, He will punish you with a painful punishment.' **3827**

18. "There is no blame on the blind, nor is there blame on the lame, nor is there blame on the sick, *if they go not forth to fight*.^b And whoso obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will make

قُلْ لِلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ سُدْعُونَ
إِلَى قَوْمٍ أُولِي بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَاتِلُونَهُمْ
أَوْ يُسْلِمُونَ فَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا يُؤْتِكُمُ اللَّهُ
أَجْرًا حَسَنًا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُمْ
مِنْ قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ①٧

لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى
الْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرِيضِ
حَرَجٌ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يَدْخُلْهُ

^a9:91. ^b4:14; 24:53; 33:72.

for their repeated acts of treachery. Those Bedouin tribes who had contrived to remain behind when the Prophet went to Mecca for the Lesser Pilgrimage, finding that his cause had prospered and that they would have a good share of the booty if they joined the expedition to Khaibar, requested the Prophet to be allowed to accompany the Muslim army. They were told that they could not do so as the promise of booty was made only to those sincere Muslims who were with the Holy Prophet at Hudaibiyyah.

3827. Commentary:

The words "a people of mighty valour," may refer to the mighty forces of the Byzantine and Iranian Empires which were far superior in

means, material and numbers than any other enemy the Muslims had met so far. The verse constituted a warning that the Muslims would come into conflict with those mighty foes and would have to wage prolonged wars with them till the latter were broken and brought to their knees. The laggards are thus told that though they cannot be allowed to march against the Jews of Khaibar and partake of the booty, yet in the near future they would be called upon to fight against a much more powerful foe and, if they then responded to the call, they would receive a good reward. The verse also signifies that wars with the Byzantine and Iranian Empires would be fierce and long.

him enter the Gardens beneath which streams flow; but whoso turns his back, him will He punish with a grievous punishment.^{3827A}

R. 3.

19. Surely, Allah was well pleased with the believers when they were swearing allegiance to thee under the Tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down tranquillity on them, and He rewarded them with a victory at hand;³⁸²⁸

جَنَّتِ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَنْ
يَتَوَلَّ يَْعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٩﴾

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ
يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي
قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ﴿١٩﴾

3827A. Commentary:

The disbelievers have repeatedly been threatened with "a grievous and burning punishment" in the *Sūrah*. This is to warn them that the terms of the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah over which they and their fellows had gloated, would prove for them an abiding source of ignominious heart-burning.

3828. Commentary:

The swearing of allegiance referred to in the verse took place at Ḥudaibiyyah under an acacia tree after a report had reached the Holy Prophet that in breach of ambassadorial usage or etiquette his envoy, 'Uthmān, had been killed at Mecca. It was, perhaps, not so much the reported murder of 'Uthmān as the violation of a sacred and time-honoured custom that exhausted the Prophet's patience. He invited his followers to take a solemn oath at his hand that they would fight the Quraish to the last breath of their

lives. The oath came to be known as *Bai'atur-Riḍwān*, which signified that those lucky people who had taken the oath had obtained God's pleasure.

The words, "He knew what was in their hearts," mean that God was well conversant with the state of their minds, viz. that they were quite honest and sincere in their oaths and were anxious to vindicate their sincerity with their blood.

What greater proof could there be that "God sent down tranquillity on Muslims," than that, being only about 1500 in number and being far away from home, friendless and surrounded by hostile tribes and faced by a powerful enemy who was entrenched in his citadel, the Muslims were prepared to fight rather than agree to the proposed terms of the Treaty. The expression, "He rewarded them with a victory near at hand" refers to the victory of Khaibar. On his return from Ḥudaibiyyah the Prophet led an

20. And great spoils that they will take. Allah is Mighty, Wise.

3829

وَمَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ۝

21. Allah has promised you great spoils that you will take, and He has given you this in advance, and has ^arestrained the hands of men from you, that it may be a Sign for the believers, and that He may guide you on a right path. 3830

وَعَدَكُمْ اللَّهُ مَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً تَأْخُذُونَهَا
فَعَجَّلَ لَكُمْ هَذِهِ وَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَ النَّاسِ
عَنْكُمْ ۚ وَلِتَكُونَ آيَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا ۝

^a5:12.

expedition against the Jews of Khaibar (a great hotbed of Jewish intrigue and conspiracy) with those Muslims who were with him at Hudaibiyyah. Judged by worldly standards of political strategy, and in view of the apparently humiliating terms of the Treaty and of the feeling of frustration that some of the Companions felt at those terms, the Holy Prophet should have been a beaten and embittered man, yet God has styled the Treaty "a clear victory" (v. 2), "a grand achievement" (v. 6); "a mighty reward" (v. 11); and "the completion and perfection of His favour on the Prophet" (v. 3). What was it that made this "humiliating" Treaty such a significant event in the annals of Islam? The answer is: Because it opened the floodgates of spiritual and political conquests for Islam. The signing of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah was immediately followed by the conquest of Khaibar, a Jewish stronghold and a source of great danger and anxiety for Muslims. Besides, the Islamic Republic at

Medina came to be recognized as an independent sovereign state, and within the brief space of three or four years the whole of Arabia was at the feet of the Holy Prophet, followed by a chain of victories which culminated in the defeat and destruction of the great and powerful Byzantine and Iranian Empires.

3829. Commentary:

"Great Spoils" may refer to the great gains which the Muslims got as a result of the "near victory" promised in the preceding verse.

The repeated mention in the *Sūrah* of the Divine attributes "Mighty," "Wise" and "Powerful over all things" seems to signify that the seemingly humiliating Treaty of Hudaibiyyah proved a source of great power for Muslims, as it had been signed by the Prophet in obedience to God's command Who is Mighty, Wise and Powerful.

3830. Commentary:

"Great Spoils" mentioned here may refer to the great booty which fell into

22. And *He has promised you* another victory, which you have not yet achieved, but Allah has surely compassed it. And Allah has power over all things.³⁸³¹

23. And if those who disbelieve should fight you, they would certainly turn their backs; then they would find neither protector nor helper.³⁸³²

24. "Such has ever been the law of Allah; and thou shalt not find any change in the law of Allah."³⁸³³

25. And He it is Who withheld their hands from you and your hands from them in the valley of Mecca, after He had given

وَأُخْرَى لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهَا قَدْ أَحَاطَ
اللَّهُ بِهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا ﴿٢٢﴾

وَلَوْ قَاتَلَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوَلَّوْا
الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا
وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٢٣﴾

سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ وَلَنْ
تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٤﴾

وَهُوَ الَّذِي كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ
وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ بِبَطْنِ مَكَّةَ مِنْ بَعْدِ

^a17:78; 33:63; 35:44.

the hands of Muslims in the conquests which followed the victory at Khaibar, in the rest of Arabia and the neighbouring countries, but the words "He has given you this in advance," evidently refer to the spoils gained at Khaibar. The words *فَعَجَلَ لَكُمْ هَذِهِ* may also signify the good things of the present life. The words, "has restrained the hands of men from you", mean that the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah had ushered in a period of peace for Muslims.

3831. Commentary:

The verse embodies a prophecy that Muslims will achieve other great victories after the victory of Khaibar.

3832. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that whenever true believers will stand facing disbelievers in battle array, the disbelievers would suffer defeat. The verse may also mean that if fighting had broken out at Hudaibiyyah the disbelievers would certainly have suffered defeat.

3833. Commentary:

The verse means that it has always been the Law of God that truth must ultimately triumph and falsehood suffer defeat; and God's Law knows no change. This fact is writ large on the face of human history.

you victory over them. And Allah sees all that you do.³⁸³⁴

26. It is they who disbelieved and ^ahindered you from the Sacred Mosque and ^bthe offering which was prevented from reaching its place of sacrifice. And had it not been for some believing men and believing women whom you knew not and whom you might have trampled down unwittingly, so that blame might have attached to you on their account, *He would have permitted you to fight but He withheld you* that He might admit into His mercy whom He will. If they had been separated from the disbelievers, We would have surely punished those of them who disbelieved with a grievous punishment.³⁸³⁵

أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا ۝٢٦

هُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاصَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْهَدْيِ مَعْكُوفًا أَنْ يَبْلُغَ
مَحِلَّهُ ۖ وَلَوْلَا رِجَالٌ مُّؤْمِنُونَ وَنِسَاءٌ
مُّؤْمِنَاتٌ لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أَنْ تَطَؤُوهُمْ
فَتُصِيبَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ مَعَرَّةٌ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۚ
لِيَدْخِلَ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ
لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا لَعَذَّبْنَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۝٢٦

^a8:35; 16:89; 22:26; 43:38. ^b2:197.

3834. Commentary:

The words "after He had given you victory over them," may signify that in view of the circumstances in which the Muslims were then placed and of the far-reaching results it produced, the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah was tantamount to a great victory. The words may also refer to the victories that God had granted to Muslims before they came to Ḥudaibiyyah — the victory at Badr, the safe return of

Muslims and the Holy Prophet to Medina from Uḥud after they had been placed in a very dangerous and delicate situation, and the complete frustration of the Meccans in their evil designs to destroy Islam in the Battle of the Ditch when they were repulsed with severe loss, etc. In a sense these were all victories of believers over disbelievers.

3835. Important Words:

عر (blame) is derived from معرة

27. When those who disbelieved harboured in their hearts prideful indignation, the indignation of the Days of Ignorance, ^aAllah sent down His tranquillity on His Messenger and on the believers, and made them adhere firmly to the principle of righteousness, and they were better entitled to it and more worthy of it. And Allah knows everything full well.³⁸³⁶

إِذْ جَعَلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ
الْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَى وَكَانُوا أَحَقَّ
بِهَا وَأَهِلَّهَا^{٢٧} وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
عَلِيمًا^{٢٨}

^a9:26.

(‘arra). They say عرت الابل i.e. the camels were or became mangy or scabby. عره means, he did to him an abominable thing; he did to him what he disliked; he disgraced him. عره بشر means, he aspersed him or charged or upbraided him with evil, or he wronged him. معرة means, a cause of reviling or being reviled; a crime or sin that is noxious like mange or scab; a foul or abominable thing; a cause of grief or vexation; disgrace; annoyance, hurt, harm or injury (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that though the Meccans gloated over the terms of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah which, in their ignorance, they thought were very advantageous to them and humiliating for Muslims, and though the latter feeling that the terms were being forcibly wrung from them were crestfallen and did not know that in reality the terms had laid the

foundations of a very prosperous and bright future for Islam, yet God had His own design in not permitting the fight to take place. There was a nucleus of Muslims in Mecca and if the fight had taken place, the Muslim army would have unknowingly killed their own brethren in faith, thereby causing great injury to their own cause, and earning obloquy and opprobrium for themselves. In fact, from whatever angle the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah may be viewed it was indeed a great victory.

3836. Important Words:

حمية (prideful indignation) is inf. noun from حمى which means, he refused to bear or endure or tolerate wrongful treatment. They say حمى عنه او حمى عليه i.e. he was ashamed, and he disdained or scorned to do it. حمى عليه means, he was angry with him. حمية (syn. غيرة and أنفة) means, disdain,

R. 4.

28. Surely has Allah fulfilled for His Messenger the vision. You will certainly enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allah will, in security, *some having their heads shaven, and others having their hair cut short; and you will have no fear. But He knew what you knew not. He has, in fact, ordained for you, besides that, a victory near at hand.*³⁸³⁷

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّؤْيَا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ
لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
أَمِنِينَ ۚ مُخْلَقِينَ رُءُوسَكُمْ
وَمُقَصِّرِينَ ۚ لَا تَخَافُونَ ۚ فَعَلِمَ مَا
لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا فَجَعَلَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ
فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ﴿٧٨﴾

scorn or indignation; jealousy; indignation which is the result of a feeling of pride (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that against their own tradition and usage that access to, and the circuit of, the Ka'bah was not to be prevented in the four Sacred Months, the pagans of Mecca, from a false sense of dignity and national pride, had made it a point of honour with them not to allow Muslims to enter Mecca and perform the Lesser Pilgrimage (عمرة). But "Allah sent His tranquillity" upon the Muslims and though they were greatly upset over the seemingly humiliating terms of the Treaty, yet in deference to the command of their noble Master they bore it all with becoming restraint and patient and did not abandon the path of rectitude and righteousness under the most severe provocation. The Companions of the Holy Prophet alone were capable of setting such a noble example.

3837. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet had seen a vision that he was performing the circuit of the Ka'bah with his Companions (Bukhārī). The Prophet set out for Mecca with about 1500 of his Companions to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage. It is to this "vision" that the verse under comment refers. The Prophet was not allowed access to the Ka'bah by the Quraish. On the contrary, he had to sign a treaty of which the terms as mentioned above seemed to be very humiliating and hurtful to the Muslims' self-respect. They were highly upset, the illustrious 'Umar, more than anyone else, not only at the terms, but also at the fact that the vision as he understood it had not been fulfilled, could not understand how the Prophet's journey had served its purpose. He was not quite satisfied with the explanation that the vision did not signify the Pilgrimage would be performed that very year. He was

29. ^aHe it is Who has sent His Messenger, with guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may make it prevail over *all other* religions. And ^bsufficient is Allah as a Witness. **3838**

30. Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those who are with him are ^chard against the disbelievers and tender among themselves. Thou seest them bowing and prostrating themselves in Prayer, ^dseeking Allah's grace and pleasure. Their mark is upon their faces, being the traces of prostrations. This is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is like unto a seed-produce that sends forth its sprout, then makes it strong; it then becomes thick, and stands

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى
وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ
وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا^{٢١}

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ^ط وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ
أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ
تَرَهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ
اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ
مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ^ط ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي
التَّوْرَةِ^ث وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ^ش من القرآن
كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ
فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سَوْقِهِ يَعْجِبُ
الرُّعَاةَ لِيُغَيِّظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ^ط وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ

^a61:10. ^b4:167; 6:20; 13:44; 29:53. ^c9:123. ^d59:9.

in this frame of mind when, on the way back to Medina, this *Sūrah* was revealed and the Prophet called for him and recited it to him. The *Sūrah* was clear and emphatic that the Prophet's vision was true and that the Muslims would most certainly enter the Ka'bah and perform the ceremonies of the Lesser Pilgrimage. The Prophet's journey, besides serving other useful purposes to

which reference is already made, established an important precedent that sometimes even great Prophets of God are liable to place seemingly erroneous interpretations on their visions.

3838. Commentary:

In the preceding verse reference was made to the vision of the Holy Prophet which had brought about the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah which in turn

firm on its stem, delighting the sowers—that He may cause the disbelievers to burn with rage *at the sight* of them. Allah has promised, unto those of them who believe and do good works, forgiveness and a great reward.³⁸³⁹

ع
٣٩

مَغْفِرَةً وَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

led to the very rapid expansion of Islam in Arabia and to its consolidation, and ultimately to the Fall of Mecca and the submission of the whole of Arabia to the Holy Prophet. The present verse makes a very bold prophecy to the effect that not only would Islam prevail in Arabia but would also eventually triumph over all other religions. The signs of the fulfilment of this prophecy are already in evidence.

3839. Important Words:

شديد (hard) is the plural of شديد which is derived from شد which means, he was or became strong. شد على عدوه means, he attacked his enemy. شديد means, firm or firm of heart; strong; compact; powerful; robust; courageous; brave; keen or tenacious; niggardly; avaricious; exalted (Lane & Aqrab).

سوم (mark) is derived from سوم (sawwama). They say سوم الفرس i.e. he put a mark upon the horse; he put the mark with iron such as is used for branding or with something whereby he should be known. سومة or سيما means, a mark, sign or token or badge by

which a thing is known or by which the good is known from the bad (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The preceding verse had made a great prophecy about the eventual triumph of Islam over all other religious systems. The verse under comment signifies that the foundation of the grand and glorious future of Islam have already been laid by "Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah and those who are with him," and mentions some of the noble qualities of good and sincere believers, through whose selfless efforts this consummation will be brought about. They are brave, firm and courageous and not susceptible to the evil influences of bad persons and environment; on the contrary, they are loving and kind towards each other. These are the two essential characteristics of a progressive and rising people who seek to leave their mark on the course of world events. Elsewhere in the Quran (5:55) the true and good Muslims have been described as أدلة على المؤمنين أعزّة على الكافرين i.e.

kind and humble towards believers and hard and firm against disbelievers.

The words, "this is their description in the Torah," may refer to the Biblical description, viz. "he shined forth from mount Paran and he came with ten thousands of saints" (Deut. 33:2). And the expression, "and their description in the Gospel is like unto a seed-produce" may refer to another Biblical parable, viz. "Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed seeds some fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some

thirtyfold" (Matt. 13:3-8). The former description seems to apply to the Companions of the Holy Prophet and the latter parable to the followers of Jesus' Counterpart, the Promised Messiah, who, from very small and insignificant beginnings, are destined to develop into a mighty organization and gradually but progressively to carry the Message of Islam to the ends of the earth till it will prevail and triumph over all religions, and its opponents will wonder at, and be jealous of, its power and prestige.

CHAPTER 49

AL-ḤUJURĀT

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Title, Context, and Date of Revelation

By common consent this is a Medinite *Sūrah*. It was revealed in the 9th year of Hijrah, after the Fall of Mecca. The *Sūrah* takes its title from its 5th verse in which calling out to the Holy Prophet from behind the *Ḥujurāt* (private compartments) has been strongly condemned, since shouting out to him is bad manners and is also likely to intrude upon his privacy and precious time.

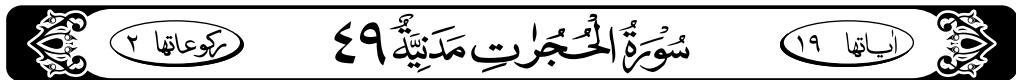
As with the Fall of Mecca Islam had become a great political power, and large masses of people had entered its fold, the *Sūrah* was revealed to teach good manners and morals to the newly-initiated people. The *Sūrah* also deals with some social evils which find their way into a materially advanced and wealthy society (the Muslims had become such a society after the conquest of Arabia), and speaks of the accession to Islam of great political power and material wealth. Naturally, the *Sūrah* also embodies regulations for the settlement of international disputes.

Summary of Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with strict injunctions to Muslims to show full regard and respect to the Holy Prophet which befits his station as a Divine Messenger. They are also enjoined not to anticipate his decisions but to give unquestioning obedience to his commands. They are further enjoined not to raise their voices above his voice; this not only constitutes bad manners but also shows lack of proper respect which is calculated to undermine discipline in the Muslim Community.

The *Sūrah* then warns Muslims to be on their guard against giving credence to false rumours, as such rumours, if readily accepted as true, without being subjected to sifting and searching examination, are calculated to land Muslims into very awkward situations. It further lays down, in brief words, rules, on which, if carried out with sincere intent and honest motives, a League of Nations or a United Nations Organisation can be built on sound and solid foundations. Next, the *Sūrah*, mentions some social evils which, if not effectively checked in time, eat into the vitals of a community and undermine its whole social structure. Of these social evils the common ones are suspicion, false accusation, spying, backbiting, and the most pronounced and far-reaching in its evil consequences, viz. conceit and pride born of a false sense of racial superiority. The Quran recognizes no basis of superiority save that of piety and righteous conduct.

The *Sūrah* ends on the note that true and sincere belief is a divine favour and the test of a true believer lies in the fact that if once he has given his allegiance to a noble cause, he strives with his whole being to promote it.



(AL-HUJURĀT)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.³⁸⁴⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. O ye who believe! be not forward in the presence of Allah and His Messenger, but fear Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.³⁸⁴¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْدُمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ②

3. O ye who believe! raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him, as you speak aloud to one another, lest your works become vain while you perceive not.³⁸⁴²

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ③

4. Verily, those who lower their voices in the presence of the

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَغْضُّونَ أَصْوَاتَهُمْ عِنْدَ

^aSee 1:1.

3840. Commentary:

See 1:1.

3841. Commentary:

Mecca had fallen. The whole of Arabia lay prostrate at the Prophet's feet. Life had become quite safe and secure for Muslims and wealth and great riches had come into their possession. A life of ease and comfort generally follows in the wake of riches, resulting in lack of discipline and other very serious social evils. Therefore rules of conduct have been revealed in this *Sūrah* to safeguard

the Muslim Community against these evils. They are told to show proper respect and regard for the Holy Prophet and to give him unqualified obedience and not to anticipate his commands or to prefer their own wishes to his.

3842. Commentary:

The verse lays great stress on observing an attitude of utmost respectfulness towards the Holy Prophet. The Muslims should not talk loudly in his presence or address him aloud. This is not only bad manners

Messenger of Allah—those are they whose hearts Allah has purified for righteousness. For them is forgiveness and a great reward.³⁸⁴³

5. Those who shout out to thee from without *thy private* apartments—most of them lack understanding.³⁸⁴⁴

6. And if they had waited patiently until thou came out to them it would be better for them. But Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.

7. O ye who believe! if an unrighteous person brings you any news, ^ainvestigate it fully, lest you harm a people in ignorance, and then be

رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ امْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ
قُلُوبَهُمْ لِيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا
عَظِيمًا ④

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ينادُونَكَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ الْحُجُرَاتِ
أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ⑤

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ⑥

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ
بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ
فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ ⑦

^a4:95.

but is calculated to do moral injury to one so rude as not to show respect due to the Leader.

3843. Important Words:

امتحن is derived from محن. They say, محن فلانا i.e. he tried or put to the test such a one. محنه عشرين سوطا means, he flogged him with twenty stripes. محن الفضة means, he purified the silver by putting it in the fire. محن البئر means, he took out the earth from the well and cleared it (Tāj & Rāghib).

Commentary:

To speak in low tones in the

presence of the Prophet is indicative of respect for him and of one's own humility of heart which is a good moral quality; while unnecessarily raising of voice smacks of conceit and arrogance.

3844. Commentary:

Calling out to the Prophet in a loud voice from outside his house amounts to intruding upon his privacy and shows lack of respect for his person and for his valuable time; and only an ill-mannered person would be guilty of such foolish behaviour.

repentant for what you have done.³⁸⁴⁵

8. And know that among you is the Messenger of Allah; if he were to comply with your wishes in most matters, you would surely come to trouble; but Allah has endeared the faith to you and "has made it *look* beautiful to your hearts, and He has made disbelief, wickedness and disobedience hateful to you. Such indeed are those who follow the right course.³⁸⁴⁶

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ۖ لَوْ
يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ
وَزَيَّنَّهٗ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ
الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ الرُّشْدُونَ ﴿٨﴾

^a6:109.

3845. Commentary:

Though after the Fall of Mecca, at the time when this *Sūrah* was revealed, almost the whole of Arabia had entered the fold of Islam. Some tribes still refused to accept the new order of things and were determined upon fighting the Muslims to the bitter end. Moreover, the neighbouring Byzantine and Persian Empires were awakening to a realization of the challenge to their power which they thought had arisen in Arabia, and war with Islam seemed inevitable. So the direction embodied in the verse under comment was necessary. The Muslims are told that even when the exigencies of war necessitate prompt action to forestall a military move on the enemy's part, rumours which are naturally very much rife in time of war should not be given ready credence. They should

be tested and their correctness ascertained before action is taken upon them.

3846. Commentary:

The verse continues the general theme of the *Sūrah*, the immediately preceding verse constituting a necessary parenthesis. In the earlier verses the Muslims were enjoined to give unquestioning obedience to the Holy Prophet and to show respect to him which befitted his station as God's great Prophet. In this verse they are told that the Prophet would seek their counsel in matters concerning them but he should not be expected to follow their advice as he received guidance from on high and because also his was the final responsibility, and their judgement, at best, might be defective. It was enough for them that God, through His Grace, "has endeared faith to you."

9. Through the grace and favour of Allah. And Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.

فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً ۖ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ ①

10. And if two parties of believers fight each other, ^amake peace between them; then if *after that* one of them transgresses against the other, fight the party that transgresses until it returns to the command of Allah. Then if it returns, make peace between them with equity, and act justly. Verily, Allah loves the just.³⁸⁴⁷

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا
فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا
عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَمَا تِلْكَ الْأُتْرُقُ الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّىٰ
تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ
فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا ۚ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ②

^a8:2.

3847. Commentary:

The central theme of the *Sūrah* is the solidarity of Islam. Directions and rules of conduct which are calculated to achieve and maintain this solidarity have been laid down in it in some detail. Some of these rules have been mentioned in the preceding verses, others follow in the verses that come later. A great danger to the security and solidarity of the Muslim State or Community are the disputes and quarrels that haply might arise between different Muslim groups or parties. The verse under comment provides a most effective remedy to compose these quarrels. Primarily, the verse deals with the settlement of disputes between Muslim parties, but it equally embodies a sound basis on which a really effective "League of Nations" or a "United Nations Organisation" can be built. The verse

lays down the following principles for the maintenance of international peace.

As soon as there are indications of disagreement between two nations, the other nations, instead of taking sides with one or the other, should at once serve notice upon them, calling upon them to submit their differences for settlement to a "League of Nations" or "United Nations Organisation", as the case may be. If they agree, the dispute will be amicably settled. But if one of them refuses to submit to the "League", or having submitted refuses to accept the award of the "League" and prepares to make war, the other nations should all fight it. It is evident that one nation, however strong, cannot withstand the united might of all other nations and is bound to make a speedy submission. In that event, terms of peace should be settled

11. Surely *all* believers are brothers. So make peace between your brothers, and fear Allah that mercy may be shown to you.³⁸⁴⁸

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا
بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُرحَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

R. 2.

12. O ye who believe! let not one people deride *another* people, haply they may be better than they, nor let women deride *other* women, haply they may be better than they. ^aAnd defame not your own people, nor call *one another* by nicknames. Bad *indeed* is evil reputation after *the profession* of belief; and those who repent not, such are the wrongdoers.³⁸⁴⁹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ
قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ
وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِنْ نِسَاءٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا
مِنْهُنَّ ۚ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ
وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ ۚ بِئْسَ الْإِسْمُ
الْفُسُوقَ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتُبْ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

^a68:12; 104:2.

between the two original parties to the dispute. The other nations should act merely as mediators and not as parties to the dispute, and should not put forward new claims arising out of the conflict with the refractory nation, for that would lay the foundation of fresh disputes and quarrels. The terms of peace should be just and equitable with reference to the merits of the dispute; they should be confined to the original dispute between the parties and should not be allowed to travel beyond it.

It is only such a "League" or "Organisation" which can safely be entrusted with the maintenance of international peace, not a League or Organisation whose very existence is

dependent upon the goodwill of others.

3848. Commentary:

The verse lays special stress on Islamic brotherhood. Islam tolerates no discord or dissensions between brothers. If there happens to arise a quarrel or dispute between two Muslim individuals or groups, other Muslims are bound at once to bring about reconciliation between the quarrelling parties. Islam's real strength lies in this ideal of brotherhood which transcends all barriers of caste, colour or clime.

3849. Important Words:

لا تلمزوا (defame not) is derived from لمر. They say لمره i.e. he made a sign to

13. O ye who believe! avoid much suspicion^a; for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead? Certainly you would loathe it. And fear Allah, surely, Allah is Oft-Returning with compassion and is Merciful. 3850

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ
الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا
تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا
أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ
مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٨٥٠﴾

^a10:67; 53:29.

him with the eye, or the like, as the head, and the lip, with low speech. This is the original signification; according to some other authorities the primary signification of the expression is: (1) he pushed him or impelled him or repelled him or he struck or beat him; (2) he blamed, upbraided, or reproached him; he found fault with him; or he did so in his face; or he spoke evil of him; or spoke of him in a manner that he disliked, mentioning vices or faults as chargeable to him, either behind his back or in his face, though it might be with truth (Lane, Aqrab & Rāghib). See also 104:2.

لا تَنَابَرُوا (call not by nicknames) is derived from نَبَرَ which means, he called him by a surname or nickname and is syn. with لَقَّبَهُ (*laqqaba*), mostly signifying, he called him by a nickname, or a name of reproach or an opprobrious appellation. It also signifies, he upbraided or reproached him; or the like, being syn. with لَمَزَهُ (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

See next verse.

3850. Commentary:

As stated above the principal theme of the *Sūrah* is the establishment of concord, amity and goodwill between Muslim individuals and groups and therefore it has mentioned some of those social evils which cause discord, dissensions and differences, and corrode, corrupt and contaminate a society, eating into its vitals, and enjoins Muslims to be on their guard against them. Ridiculing and taunting others, spying, and calling by nicknames, and suspicion and backbiting are some of these social evils. Women have been particularly mentioned here in that they are more prone to fall a victim to these evils. The main cause, which lies at the root of these evils, is conceit and a false sense of superiority, which the next verse expressly deals with. By removing the basic causes of disharmony and disagreement among Muslims the

14. O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into tribes and subtribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.³⁸⁵¹

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ
وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
أَتْقَاهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٤﴾

Sūrah has laid the foundation of a firm and solid brotherhood of Islam.

3851. Important Words:

شُعُوبًا (tribes) is the plural of شَعْب (sha'bun) which is inf. noun from شَعِب (sha'ba) which means, he collected, brought together or united; or he separated, put asunder; divided or separated. شَعْب means, a great tribe; the parent of the tribes called قَبَائِل, to which they refer their origin and which comprises them; a nation; a people; a cleft or crack (Lane & Aqrab).

قَبَائِل (subtribes) is the plural of قَبِيلَة which is derived from قَبِل which means, he accepted; he took or received willingly. قَبِيلَة means, a tribe; a subtribe; a family; a body of men from one father or mother (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

From the subject of Islamic brotherhood to which reference has been made in the preceding two verses, the *Sūrah* proceeds to lay down, in the verse under comment, the basis of an all-comprehensive, all-

pervading brotherhood of man. The verse, in fact, constitutes the Magna Carta of human fraternity and equality. It has firmly laid the axe at the false and foolish notions of superiority, born of racial arrogance or national conceit. All men having been "created from a male and a female" as human beings have been declared equal in the sight of God. The worth of a man is not to be judged by the pigment of his skin, the amount of wealth he possesses or by his rank or social status, descent or pedigree, but by his moral greatness and the way in which he discharges his obligations to God and man. The whole human race is but one family. Division into tribes, nations, and races is meant to give them a better knowledge of one another, in order that they might benefit from one another's national characteristics and good qualities. This, according to Islam, is the criterion of a person's greatness and this is the only true and real criterion. The Holy Prophet explained the beautiful idea of the

15. The Arabs of the desert say, 'We believe.' Say, "You have not believed yet, but rather say, 'We have submitted', for *true* belief has not yet entered into your hearts." But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not detract anything from your deeds. Surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.³⁸⁵²

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلِتْكُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْئًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ^{١٥}

16. "The believers are only those who *truly* believe in Allah and His Messenger, and then doubt not, but strive with their

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا

^a9:20; 61:12.

brotherhood of man inculcated in this verse in his own inimitable way on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage at Mecca, a short time before his death. Addressing a vast concourse of Muslims the Prophet said, "O ye men! Your God is One and your ancestor is one. An Arab possesses no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab over an Arab. A white is in no way superior to a red, nor, for that matter, a red to a white, but only to the extent to which he discharges his duty to God and man. The most honoured among you in the sight of God is the one who is most righteous" (Baihaqī). These noble words spoken by the Prophet during his Farewell Pilgrimage which have resounded through the centuries epitomize one of Islam's loftiest ideals and strongest principles. It goes to the credit of the Holy Prophet that in a society riven

with class distinction, he preached a message intensely democratic.

3852. Important Words:

لا يَلِتْ (will not detract) is derived from أَلَتْ which means, it (a thing) decreased, diminished, lessened; it became defective or deficient; incomplete or imperfect. أَلَتْهُ أَوْ وَلَتْهُ حَقَّهُ means, he diminished to him his right or due or defrauded him of a portion of it (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

All Muslims form an integral part of Islamic brotherhood. Islam confers equal rights on the unlettered and uncultured sons of the desert as it does on the civilized and cultured dwellers of cities and towns; only it exhorts the former to make greater efforts to learn and assimilate the teachings of Islam and make them the rule of their lives.

possessions and their persons in the cause of Allah. It is they who are truthful.³⁸⁵³

بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

17. Say, ^a‘Will you acquaint Allah with your faith, while ^bAllah knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and Allah knows all things full well?’

قُلْ أَتَعْلَمُونَ اللَّهَ بِدِينِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18. They deem it as a favour to thee that they have embraced Islam. Say, ‘Deem not your embracing Islam a favour unto me. On the contrary,^c Allah has bestowed a favour upon you in that He has guided you to the true Faith, if you are truthful.’

يَمُنُّونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُلْ لَا تَمُنُّوا
عَلَى إِسْلَامِكُمْ ۚ بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ
أَنْ هَدَيْكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

3854

19. Verily, ^dAllah knows the secrets of the heavens and the earth. And Allah sees all what you do.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمُوتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

^a10:19. ^b20:8; 22:71; 27:66. ^c3:165. ^d11:124; 16:78.

3853. Commentary:

True and sincere belief to which reference has been made in the preceding verse consists of three important ingredients—strong and firm faith in Allah, absolute freedom from doubt and misgiving as to the truth of Islam and striving with all means within one’s power in the cause of God. It is only those sincere and steadfast Muslims who possess

these qualifications who are entitled to be called "the truthful ones" i.e. those who have fulfilled their pledged word to God.

3854. Commentary:

True and sincere faith is the most precious possession of a Muslim. By accepting Islam he does no favour to anybody; on the contrary, it is a favour of God that one is guided to the Truth.

CHAPTER 50

QĀF

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This *Sūrah* is of Meccan origin. All competent authorities assign its revelation to the early Meccan period. Its tenor and contents support this view.

The *Sūrah* is the first of a group of seven chapters which end with *Sūrah* Al-Wāqī‘ah. Like all Meccan *Sūrahs*, it lays special stress, in emphatic and prophetic language, on the Quran being the revealed Word of God, on Resurrection being an undoubted reality, and particularly on the ultimate triumph of the cause of Islam. The *Sūrah* points to the phenomena of nature and to the histories of the past Prophets as guides leading to this inevitable conclusion. The *Sūrah* takes its title from its initial abbreviated letter ق (Qāf).

The preceding two *Sūrahs* had dealt with the prospects of a great and glorious future for Islam, and also with the social and political problems that arise when power and wealth come to a people. The present *Sūrah* having the abbreviated letter ق (Qāf) in its beginning, points to the fact that the Almighty God has the power to make the weak and disorganized Arabs into a powerful nation, and that He will certainly bring about this consummation, using the Quran as the means and instrument for achieving that purpose.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with the abbreviated letter Qāf (ق) which is the last of the مقطعات (abbreviated letters) used in the Quran. It represents the Divine attribute قدير or قادر (*Qādir* or *Qadīr*) meaning, the Mighty, the Powerful, and at once starts to deal with the all-important subject of Resurrection; and in order to prove the truth of this primal fact uses as an argument the phenomenon that a people, who for long centuries were spiritually dead and defunct, received a new and vigorous life through the Quran. The *Sūrah* proceeds to say that the Holy Prophet's enemies cannot bring themselves to accept the fact of a Warner appearing from among them to tell them that they will be raised to life after "they are dead and have become dust." They are told to study the wonderful creation of the celestial firmament with the beautiful stars and planets which adorn it and which work with a regularity and punctuality that knows no deviation. They are further told to ponder over the creation of the vast expanse of earth which grows all sorts of fruits and foods for its dwellers. The Author and Architect of this great and complex universe, the *Sūrah* says, possesses the power and wisdom to give man a new life after his physical habitat has disintegrated.

Next, the *Sūrah* points to the purposefulness of the creation of man—God’s supreme creature and His noblest handiwork—and to man’s freedom and complete responsibility and accountability for his actions, in a life after death, wherein he will be punished or rewarded according to the good or bad life he might have led in this world. Those who had wasted their lives in the quest of evil pursuits would be thrown into Hell, the punishments of which would be the representations of their evil deeds done in this life. And so would the rewards of Paradise be the representations of the good and noble actions of the righteous and the God-fearing in this life. Only the things of the next world would be of a nature different from those to which we are accustomed in this life.

The *Sūrah* ends on the note that the creation of the universe, and of man—the apex and acme of creation—shows that the wise Creator could not have brought into existence this complex universe without a great purpose behind it. This leads to the conclusion that there must be and there is a life beyond the grave and that all Divine Messengers and Prophets were raised to teach man this important religious doctrine, and that those who refuse to believe in this divine mission of the Prophets incur a liability in the Hereafter.



QĀF

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. ³⁸⁵⁵

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Qāf. By ^bthe Glorious Quran, ^{قَافٍ} thou art a Messenger of God. ³⁸⁵⁶

قَافٍ ۖ وَالْقُرْآنِ الْمَجِيدِ ②

^aSee 1:1. ^b56:78.

3855. Commentary:

See 1:1.

3856. Important Words:

The letter ق (Qāf) may stand for the Divine attribute قَادِر or قَادِر (Qādir or Qadir) which means, the Mighty God; or the letter may stand for القيامة حق i.e. the Resurrection is an undoubted reality. This is the last abbreviated letter used in the Quran and therefore possesses a special significance. For a detailed explanation, however, of the abbreviated letters (المقطعات) see 2:2 & 19:2.

The letter , (by) among other things may mean, 'by' or 'I swear' or 'I cite as witness or evidence.' See also 37:2.

المجيد (Glorious) is derived from مجد (majada) which means, he was or became possessed of or characterized by glory, honour, dignity, nobility, etc. or he was or became glorious, in a state of honour, dignity; noble. أجدت الابل means, the camels fed in a land abounding with pasture, and satiated themselves therewith, or lighted upon abundant herbage. أجد means, he made it (a gift) large or abundant. They say أجدنا فلان قري i.e. such a one gave us a sufficient and

superabundant entertainment. The Arabs say أجد سباً و ذماً i.e. he reviled and dispraised him much. أجد الدابة means, he gave the beast of carnage much fodder. Thus the primary signification of the root word is abundance or superabundance. مجد (majdun) means, glory, honour, dignity, nobility; (syn. كرم & شرف و عز) or ample glory, nobility, honour, dignity, etc., or the acquisition of glory, honour, etc., or acquired or personal glory, honour, etc., transmitted by one's ancestors. مجيد means, a man possessing or characterized by glory, honour, dignity; nobility. المجيد as an epithet of God signifies the Glorious or Great in dignity, Who gives liberally or bountifully. مجيد is also applied in the Quran as an epithet to the Throne (عرش) of God and to the Quran itself and signifies exalted, sublime, noble, glorious (Lane & Aqrab). See also 38:2. The words القرآن المجيد thus may mean, the Glorious Quran, the great Quran, the Quran possessing great and abundant good. In the last sense the word مجيد may be synonymous with مبارك which is also one of the epithets used by the Quran for itself (6:156). Elsewhere the Quran has

3. But they wonder that there has come to them a Warner from among themselves.^a And the disbelievers say, 'This is a strange thing.'³⁸⁵⁷

بَلْ عَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ
فَقَالَ الْكُفْرُونَ هَذَا شَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ ۝

4. 'What! when we are dead and have become dust, *shall we be raised up again?*^b That is a return far from possible.'³⁸⁵⁸

ءِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ۖ ذَلِكَ رَجْعٌ
بَعِيدٌ ۝

^a7:64. ^b13:6; 23:36; 27:68; 37:17.

been called the Quran full of wisdom (36:3), the Quran full of exhortation (38:2), the Noble Quran (56:78), the Quran which explains things fully (12:3).

Commentary:

The construction of this verse exactly resembles that of 38:2. Taking the abbreviated letter ق as signifying 'the Powerful God,' the verse may mean that the Powerful God swears by the Quran, or that He cites the Quran as witness, that by acting upon its teaching and making it a rule of their lives, its followers will achieve glory, greatness and spiritual and material grandeur. And by taking the letter as signifying القيامة i.e. the Resurrection is an undoubted reality, the verse would signify that Resurrection will certainly take place and that the Glorious Quran can be cited as an evidence to prove this claim. The proof consists in the fact: (1) that the Quran has made two claims, viz. that by acting upon its teaching the weak, oppressed and persecuted followers of the Holy Prophet will achieve glory, greatness

and spiritual and material eminence and an honoured place in the comity of the world's great nations; and (2) that Resurrection will undoubtedly take place. The fulfilment of the first prophecy, the verse implies, will substantiate and establish the truth of the second claim.

3857. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that in spite of the fact that from time immemorial God has been sending His Messengers and Prophets to guide men to the path of truth and righteousness, the people, whenever there appeared a Prophet, wondered, and considered it highly improbable that God should commission as His Messenger an ordinary man from among themselves. This attitude of disbelievers towards Divine Messengers has been referred to at several other places also in the Quran (7:64; 10:3; 38:5).

3858. Commentary:

Greater is the disbelievers' wonder at the idea, says the verse, that when they are dead and are reduced to dust, they will get a new life.

5. We know how much the earth diminishes of them *and how much it adds to them*, and with Us is a Book that preserves everything.³⁸⁵⁹

قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنْقُصُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ
وَعِنْدَنَا كِتَابٌ حَفِيظٌ ۝

6. Nay, they rejected the truth when it came to them, and so they are in a state of confusion.³⁸⁶⁰

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ فَهُمْ
فِي أَمْرٍ مَرِيجٍ ۝

7. Have they not looked at the sky above them, how We have

أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ

3859. Commentary:

The verse refutes the disbelievers' objection mentioned in the preceding verse, viz. that when they are dead and reduced to broken bones and particles of dust they would be raised again. It is the physical body, says the verse, that disintegrates and perishes. The soul is imperishable and will be given a new body to account for the deeds done in this world which are recorded in "a Book that preserves everything." The verse may also mean that even the particles of objects which the earth disintegrates are well preserved in God's knowledge. It may also signify that as complete knowledge about all the details of a thing presupposes the power to create it, and God being the Possessor of full knowledge of human anatomy and the process of its disintegration could recreate it after it had perished.

The verse may also signify that just as the earth corrupts and swallows up dead bodies, it also possesses the means of nourishing living ones.

3860. Important Words:

مرج (state of confusion) is derived from مرج (*maraja*) which means, he mixed a thing with another thing or two things together. مرج الامر (*marija*) means, the affair became corrupt, spoiled, disordered or in a confused or disordered state. مرج الناس means, the people became confused so that they could not extricate themselves from their perplexity (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that though disbelievers always reject the Divine Message, their rejection or denial does not rest on sure ground. They are always in a confused state of mind. They do not know what they should make of the Message. They call it poetry, sorcery, the day-dreaming of an ambitious visionary, the confused vapourings of an unhinged mind, or the forgery of an impostor (21:6). But the Holy Prophet and his followers stand on the bedrock of certainty and sure knowledge.

made it and adorned it,^a and there are no flaws in it?³⁸⁶¹

8. And the earth—We have spread it out, and placed therein firm mountains;^b and We have made to grow therein ^cevery kind of beautiful species,

9. As a means of enlightenment and as a reminder to every servant that turns to God.³⁸⁶²

10. ^dAnd We send down from the sky water which is full of blessings, and We produce therewith gardens and grain harvests.

11. And tall palm-trees, with spathes piled one above the other.³⁸⁶³

بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ ۝٧

وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ
وَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ ۝٨

تَبْصِرَةً وَذِكْرًا لِكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُنِيبٍ ۝٩

وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً مُبْرَكًا فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ
جِبْنَ وَحَبَّ الْحَصِيدِ ۝١٠

وَالنَّخْلَ خَلَّ لِسُقَاتِهَا طَلْعٌ نَضِيدٌ ۝١١

^a15:17; 37:7; 41:13; 67:6. ^b13:4; 15:20; 31:11; 77:28. ^c27:61; 31:11. ^d24:44; 25:49.

3861. Important Words:

فروج (flaws) is the plural of فرج which means, a cleft, an opening, a gap, and hence a flaw or defect (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

This and the following few verses draw attention to the marvels of creation, the wonderful design in the universe, to the celestial firmament with its countless beautiful planets and stars, to earth and its wide expanse teeming with human and animal life, and points to the inevitable inference that the Great and Wise Designer, the Architect and the Controller, Who could bring into being this wonderful universe and who placed man at its centre, does

possess the power to recreate the universe after its disintegration, and to give man a new life after he is dead.

3862. Commentary:

It is logical to assume a purpose behind physical nature. The concept of God as Designer and Creator of all things gives a coherent and complete picture of origin, design and purpose. And the existence of a purpose behind the creation implies the existence of a life after death because the very idea that with the dissolution of its physical tabernacle the human soul suffers death militates against the whole design of God and the purpose in creating the universe.

3863. Important Words:

باسقات (tall) is the plural of باسقة, fem.

12. As a provision for Our servants; ^aand We quicken thereby a dead land. Even so shall be the Resurrection. **3864**

رَزَقًا لِلْعِبَادِ^{١٤} وَآحْيَيْنَا بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَيِّتًا^{١٥}
كَذَلِكَ الْخُرُوجُ^{١٦}

13. ^bThe people of Noah rejected *the truth* before them and so *did* the People of the Well, and Thamūd. **3865**

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَأَصْحَابُ
الرَّسِّ وَثَمُودُ^{١٧}

14. And ‘Ād, and Pharaoh and the brethren of Lot. **3866**

وَعَادٌ وَفِرْعَوْنُ وَإِخْوَانُ لُوطٍ^{١٨}

15. ^cAnd the Dwellers of the Wood, and the people of Tubba‘. ^dAll of them rejected the Messengers *with the result*

وَأَصْحَابُ الْاَيْكَةِ وَقَوْمُ تُبَّعٍ^{١٩} كُلٌّ
كَذَّبَ الرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ وَعِيدِ^{٢٠}

^a25:50; 43:12. ^b9:70; 14:10; 38:13; 40:32. ^c15:79; 26:177; 38:14. ^d15:80; 26:140; 38:15.

gen. of بسق which is act. part. from بسق. They say بسق النخل i.e. the palm trees were or became tall or exceedingly tall and full grown or they bore fruit. بسق عليهم means, he overcame them, excelled them or was superior to them. بسق في علمه means, he excelled in his knowledge or learned the whole of it. بسقت الشمس means, the sun rose high. باسق الاخلاق means, a person endowed with noble, moral and mental qualities. نخلة باسقة means, an exceedingly tall palm tree or palm tree bearing fruit (Lane & Aqrab).

منضود or نضيد (piled one above the other) is derived from نضد. They say نضد المتاع i.e. he put goods one upon the other or set them together in regular order or piled them up. تنضدت الاسنان means, the teeth were set in regular order (Lane & Aqrab).

3864. Commentary:

The verse means that just as God sends down rain from heaven and causes a dry dead land to bloom and blossom and pulsate with a new vigorous life, and brings forth from the earth all sorts of flowers and fruits, similarly He can and will give a new life to man after he is dead so that he might account for and be rewarded or punished for the actions good or bad he might have done in this world.

3865. Commentary:

For the People of Noah see 11:26-49; for اصحاب الرس (Companions of the Well) 25:39, and for Thamūd 11:62-69.

3866. Commentary:

For ‘Ād see 11:51-61.

that My threatened punishment befell *them*.³⁸⁶⁷

16. "Have We then become weary with the first creation? Nay, but they are in confusion about the new creation."³⁸⁶⁸

R. 2.

17. And assuredly, We have created man and We know what his mind whispers *to him*, and ^bWe are nearer to him than *even his jugular vein*.³⁸⁶⁹

18. When the two Recording angels record *everything*, one

أَفَعَيْنَا بِالْخَلْقِ الْأَوَّلِ بَلْ هُمْ فِي لَبْسٍ
مِّنْ خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ۝١٦

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ
بِهِ نَفْسُهُ ۖ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ
حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ ۝١٧

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّينَ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ

^a50:39. ^b86:5.

3867. Commentary:

For اصحاب الأيكة (Dwellers of the Wood) see 15:79 and for the People of Tubba' 44:38. The verse purports to say that the above-mentioned peoples were warned by their respective Prophets that if they rejected them, they would be punished in this world and would also have to account for their sins in the next. The first warning was literally fulfilled and, therefore, the second one is also bound to be fulfilled.

3868. Important Words:

عَيْنَا (We have become weary) is derived from عَى ('ayya). They say عَى بِأَمْرِهِ او عَنْ أَمْرِهِ i.e. he lacked power, strength or ability to perform or accomplish his affair; was unable to execute it through or found not the right way to do it. عَى الْأَمْرَ means, he

was ignorant of the affair. عَا means, he was or became tired, fatigued or wearied عَى فِي مَنْطِقِهِ means, he found not the right way to express himself (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In these verses "creation", besides its ordinary meaning, signifies spiritual awakening or revolution brought about by a Prophet among his people.

3869. Commentary:

Wonderful is God's creation of the universe, but much more wonderful is the creation of man. The fact that man is master of his conduct and is responsible for his decisions is here put forward as another argument to support the inevitability of the Resurrection. In fact man's life on Earth is "the seedbed of an eternal future".

sitting on *his* right and *the other* on *his* left, ³⁸⁷⁰

19. He utters not a word but ^athere is by him a guardian angel ready to record it. ³⁸⁷¹

20. ^bAnd the stupor of death certainly comes. 'This is what thou wast trying to run from.' ³⁸⁷²

21. ^cAnd the trumpet shall be blown: 'This is the Day of Promise.'

22. And every soul shall come forth *and* along with it there

وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ ①٨

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ①٩

وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ط ذَلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ ②٠

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ ط ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْوَعِيدِ ②١

وَجَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَعَها سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ ②٢

^a43:81; 82:11-12. ^b6:94; 23:100. ^c18:100; 23:102; 36:52; 39:69; 69:14.

3870. Important Words:

يلقى (will record) is derived from تلقى. They say تلقى الشيء منه i.e. he received or got the thing; he learned it from him, hence preserved or recorded it (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

According to some commentators the angel sitting on man's right records his good actions and that on his left, his bad actions; the words 'on the right' standing for his good actions and 'on the left' for his bad actions. Every deed or spoken word leaves its impress in the atmosphere and thus is preserved. Elsewhere in the Quran it is stated that the limbs of man—his hands, feet and tongue—will bear witness against him on the Judgement Day. Thus different parts of a man's body may also be the recorders referred to in the present verse as the two recording angels. See

also 24:25; 36:66.

3871. Important Words:

يلفظ (he utters) is aorist from لفظ. They say لفظه البحر i.e. the sea cast it forth upon the shore, لفظ فلان نفسه means, such a one died. لفظ القول أو بالقول means, he uttered or spoke the word (Lane & Aqrab).

عتيد (ready) is derived from عتد. They say عتد الشيء i.e. the thing was or became ready, at hand, prepared; it became great, big or bulky. عتيد means, ready, at hand, near; bulky, big or great (Lane & Aqrab).

3872. Important Words:

تحيد (thou wast trying to run from) is derived from حاد. They say حاد عنه أو منه i.e. he turned aside or away from it; he removed or went away or went far away from it; he shunned or avoided it from fear or disdain. حاد عن الطريق means, he turned aside from the road (Lane & Aqrab).

will be an *angel* to drive and an *angel* to bear witness. **3873**

23. *Then We shall say, 'Thou wast heedless of this; now We have removed from thee thy veil, and sharp is thy sight this day.'* **3874**

24. And his companion will say, 'This is what I have ready of *his record*' **3875**

25. *We shall say to his two Companions, 'Cast ye twain*

لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا
فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ
الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَقَالَ قَرِينُهُ هَذَا مَا لَدَيَّ عَتِيدٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

أَلْقِيَا فِي جَهَنَّمَ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

3873. Commentary:

سائق (driver) may be the angel that sits on man's left and records his bad deeds and as a punishment for them will drive him to Hell, and شهيد may be the angel that sits on his right and records his good actions and will bear witness in his favour. Or the two words metaphorically may stand for man's misused limbs and faculties and those well and properly used. See also verse 18 above; 24:25 and 36:66.

3874. Important Words:

بصر (eye) means, eye; the light whereby the organ of sight perceives the things; knowledge; discernment; intelligence (Lane & Aqrab).

حاد (sharp) is derived from حد which means, he turned away or averted a person from a thing. حد شيئاً عن means, he distinguished or separated by some mark a thing from another. حد السكين means, he sharpened

the knife. حد بصره اليه means, he looked sharply or attentively at him. رجل حديد means, a man sharp of intellect or understanding (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse means that in the next world the veil will be lifted from the eyes of man and his vision and mental perception will become clearer and sharper. He will see the consequences of his actions in an embodied form which were hidden from his eyes in this world and will realize that which he used to regard merely as an illusion, was a hard and stark reality.

3875. Commentary:

قرينه (his companion) may signify his evil companion, or the Satan, who has been called elsewhere in the Quran, man's evil companion 4:39; 43:39, because it is at his instigation that man defies God's commandments.

into Hell every ungrateful enemy of truth.³⁸⁷⁶

26. ^a‘Hinderer of good, transgressor, doubter,

27. ‘Who sets up another God beside Allah. So do ye twain cast him into the dreadful torment.’

28. ^bHis associate will say, ‘O our Lord, it was not I that caused him to rebel; but he *himself* was too far gone in error.’

29. God will say, ‘Quarrel not in My presence, I gave you the warning beforehand.’³⁸⁷⁷

30. ‘The sentence *passed by Me* cannot be changed, ^cand I am

مَتَاعٍ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ مُّرِيبٍ ۝٢٦

الَّذِي جَعَلَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَأَنْقِيهِ
فِي الْعَذَابِ الشَّدِيدِ ۝٢٧

قَالَ قَرِينُهُ رَبَّنَا مَا أَطْغَيْتُهُ وَلَكِنْ كَانَ
فِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ ۝٢٨

قَالَ لَا تَخْتَصِمُوا لَدَيَّ وَقَدْ قَدَّمْتُ
إِلَيْكُمْ بِالْوَعِيدِ ۝٢٩

مَا يَبْدُلُ الْقَوْلُ لَدَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا بِظَلَّامٍ

^a68:13. ^b14:23. ^c3:183; 8:52; 22:11; 41:47.

3876. Important Words:

عَنِيْد (enemy) is derived from عَنَدَ which means, he went aside from it; he opposed and rejected what was true or just; he overstepped or transgressed the proper bound or limit; he acted immoderately or in rebellion. عَنِيْد is used here in all the senses of the root word (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The dual form in أَلْقِيَا is used either because the command is given to the two angels—the سَائِقِ and the شَهِيد —or in order to impart emphasis to the command. This form of expression is also used in 23:100 where a plural

verb is used for the subject in the singular. The plural form اِرْجِعُوْنَ in that verse is used to lend emphasis to the disbelievers’ desire to be sent back to this world, and represents the repetition of the singular form اِرْجِعْ (irj ‘inī).

3877. Commentary:

It is human nature that when an evildoer is confronted with the evil consequences of his deeds, he seeks to shift his responsibility to others. It is this state of mind of the disbeliever which is depicted in this verse. He will hold the Satan responsible for his own transgressions and sins. See also 2:167-168.

not in the least unjust to My servants.' **3878**

لِّلْعَيْدِ ۚ

R. 3.

31. On that day We will say to Hell, 'Art thou filled up?', and it will answer, 'Is there any more?' **3879**

يَوْمَ نَقُولُ لِجَهَنَّمَ هَلِ امْتَلَأَتْ وَتَقُولُ
هَلْ مِنْ مَّزِيدٍ ۚ

32. ^aAnd Heaven will be brought near to the righteous, no longer remote. **3880**

وَأُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ ۚ

33. *And it will be said*, 'This is what was promised to you—to everyone who always turned to God and was watchful of his actions.

هَذَا مَا تُوْعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيفٍ ۚ

^a26:91; 81:14.

3878. Commentary:

God admonishes both the parties to stop wrangling and quarrelling and shifting the responsibility to one another as His sentence has already been pronounced and His Word never changes.

3879. Commentary:

The dialogue is metaphorical. Hell has been personified here and words are put in its mouth to express its state or condition and not that it will actually speak or, for that matter, it can speak. The word قال has been used in this sense in 41:12 also where the heaven and the earth have been described as saying that they obey divine laws willingly. It is one of the peculiarities and beauties of the Arabic language that it uses words and expressions for inanimate things which are used for human beings.

There is a famous Arabic proverb:

قال الجدار للوداد لم تشقني قالت سل من يدقني

i.e. the wall said to the peg "why dost thou pierce me?" It said, "Ask him who strikes me from behind." Similarly, a famous Arab poet says:

يريد الرمح صدر أبي براء

و يعدل عن دماء بني عقيل

i.e. the spear intends to pierce the breast of Abū Barā', but it turns away from the blood of the sons of 'Uqail. (Lane).

The expression هل من مزيد in fact, points to man's unlimited capacity for committing sins and his inordinate desire for worldly comforts which pave his way to Hell.

3880. Commentary:

If, as mentioned in the preceding verse, more and more sinners will be thrown into Hell for being purged and purified of their spiritual maladies, the present verse says, that Heaven will also be brought near for the righteous and the God-fearing.

34. 'Who feared the Gracious God in private and came to Him with a penitent heart.

مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ الْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ
بِقَلْبٍ مُنِيبٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

35. ^a“Enter ye therein in peace. This is the Day of Eternity.”³⁸⁸¹

ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُودِ ﴿٣٥﴾

36. ^bThey will have therein whatever they desire, and with Us is a good deal more.³⁸⁸²

لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

37. ^cAnd how many a generation, who were greater than they in power, have We destroyed before them. They went about the lands *devising means to escape the punishment*. Was there any place of refuge for them?³⁸⁸³

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَشَدُّ
مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا فَنَقَّبُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ ۖ هَلْ مِنْ
مَّحِصٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

^a14:24; 15:47; 36:59. ^b10:27. ^c17:18; 19:75; 21:12; 36:32.

3881. Commentary:

However dreadful its punishments may appear, Hell, according to the Quran, is a temporary penitentiary, while Heaven is an eternal abode; its blessings know no limit or end (11:109).

3882. Commentary:

The righteous will have in Paradise what they desire, to their hearts' content, but as man's desires at best are limited, they will be given much more than what they desire or deserve, much more than what they would even contemplate or conceive. They will see the beautiful face of God and will bask in the warmth of His countenance. This beautiful vision in which the veil which divides man

from Allah will be lifted and His Heavenly Glory disclosed to the soul, untrammelled by its earthy raiments is, according to some authorities, what is meant by the words ولدینا مزید i.e. and with Us is a good deal more.

3883. Important Words:

نَقَّبُوا (went about) is the intensive form of نَقَبَ (*naqaba*) which means, he made a hole through a wall; he perforated, pierced or made a hole through anything. نَقَبَ فِي الْأَرْضِ means, he went or went away through the land or country or journeyed or traversed through the land.

Commentary:

Divine punishment, when it comes, is overwhelming and all-encompassing. There is no escape or

38. Therein, verily, is a reminder for him who has a heart, or who gives ear, and is attentive.³⁸⁸⁴

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرَى لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ
أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

39. ^aAnd verily, We created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in six periods and ^bno weariness touched Us.³⁸⁸⁵

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا
بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ۖ وَمَا مَسَّنَا
مِنْ تُغُوبٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

40. So bear with patience what they say, and ^cglorify thy Lord

فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ

^a7:55; 10:4; 11:8; 25:60. ^b50:16. ^c15:99; 17:79; 20:131; 40:56; 110:4.

refuge from it, however one may try.

3884. Important Words:

قلب (heart) means, heart, the soul; the conscience; the mind, meaning the intellect; the endeavour to understand, and consideration. They say ماله قلب i.e. he has no intellect or intelligence; the purest or best or choicest part of a thing; قلب الجيش means, the main body of the army; as distinguished from the van and the rear and the two wings. The word also signifies, a man genuine or pure in respect of origin or lineage, holding a middle place among his people (Lane & Aqrab).

3885. Important Words:

أيام (periods) is the plural of يوم which properly means, time absolutely (1:4) or indefinite period or stage in the development of a thing. It does not always denote the day as determined by the rising and setting of the sun. In the Quran يوم has been spoken of as equal to one or even fifty thousand years (22:48; 70:5). Elsewhere in the Quran the division

of these six days has been described in this wise; the making of the earth took two days; it took two more days for mountains, rivers, etc., to be placed upon it, and another two days for the growth of vegetable and animal life on it. See also 10:4; 41:10-13.

لغوب (weariness) is infinitive noun from لغب which means, he was fatigued, tired or wearied to the utmost; he was languid in consequence of fatigue; he was wearied in spirit or mind (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

It is a characteristic of the Quran that not only does it exonerate God's noble Prophets from all the vices and immoralities imputed to them in the Bible, but it also clears the Divine Being of the flaws and defects that are inconsistent with His Majesty and Holiness. The Bible depicts God as "having rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made" (Gen. 2:2) but according to the Quran no weariness can touch Him.

with His praise, before the rising of the sun and before its setting;

41. ^aAnd in a part of the night also do thou glorify Him, and after *prescribed* prostrations.

42. And listen, on the day when the crier will cry from a place nearby.³⁸⁸⁶

43. The day when they will hear the blast in truth; that will be the day of coming forth *from the graves*.³⁸⁸⁷

44. ^bVerily, it is We Who give life and cause death, and to Us is the final return.

45. ^cOn the day when the earth will cleave asunder *in consequence of their misdeeds* and they will come forth hastening—that will be a gathering, quite easy for Us.

46. We know best what they say; and thou hast not been

قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ ۚ

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَارَ السُّجُودِ ۝٤١

وَأَسْتَمِعْ يَوْمَ يُنَادِ الْمُنَادِ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ ۝٤٢

يَوْمَ يَسْمَعُونَ الصَّيْحَةَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُرُوجِ ۝٤٣

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي وَنُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْنَا الْمَصِيرُ ۝٤٤

يَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ الْأَرْضُ عَنْهُمْ سِرَاعًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ حَشْرٌ عَلَيْنَا يَسِيرٌ ۝٤٥

نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ وَمَا أَنْتَ

^a17:80; 52:50; 73:3-5. ^b15:24. ^c84:4.

3886. Commentary:

The "crier" may refer to the Holy Prophet. The context supports this, as the next few verses seem to refer to the spiritual resurrection brought about by the Holy Prophet among his people who at his call rose, as it were, from their graves, as the next verse implies.

The words "from a place nearby" may also signify that the call of the Holy Prophet will not remain a call in the wilderness, a distant cry. It will be listened to and accepted.

3887. Commentary:

"The blast" may also signify the stentorian call to truth of the Holy Prophet.

appointed to compel them in any way.^a So admonish, by means of the Quran, him who fears My warning. **3888**

عَلَيْهِمْ بِجَبَّارٍ ۖ فَذَكِّرْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَنْ
يَخَافُ وَعِيدِ ۝

^a6:108; 39:42; 42:7.

3888. Commentary:

The verse shows that the resurrection to which reference has been made in the preceding verse was to be brought about by the preaching and teaching of the Quran. The *Sūrah* had opened with the subject of the Final Resurrection, and the great eminence and glory which the

Muslims were to achieve through the Quran was advanced as an argument in its support. God, Man, Creation and Resurrection are the four pillars on which the whole edifice of the Quranic teaching stands, and the present *Sūrah* derives its importance from the fact that it has dealt with these subjects in some detail.

CHAPTER 51

ADH-DHĀRIYĀT

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This is a Meccan *Sūrah*. Like its predecessor it was revealed early in the Holy Prophet's ministry. Its contents and style seem to support this view. Nöldeke assigns its revelation to the fourth year of the Call. It derives its title from its first word—Adh-Dhāriyāt. It has 61 verses.

The preceding *Sūrah* had dealt with two resurrections—a spiritual resurrection which was to be brought about by the teaching of the Quran, and the Final Resurrection in the life after death, the former resurrection being cited as an argument in support of the latter. In the present *Sūrah* it is stated that a body of highly righteous men would come into existence through the influence of Quranic teachings on their lives. Like moisture-laden clouds which give rain to vast areas of parched and burnt land and make them blossom into new life, this holy band of righteous believers, having themselves awakened to a new spiritual life would carry the Quranic Message to the ends of the earth, sweeping all opposition before their onward march. The prediction, seemingly impossible of fulfilment at the time of revelation of the *Sūrah*, would constitute, when turned into a palpable reality, a strong argument to establish the fact of the Great Resurrection in the afterlife.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* says that whenever a Divine Messenger appears in the world to tell his people that there is a life beyond the grave in which they will have to account for their deeds they laugh him to scorn, and oppose and persecute him. But from among these very people there arise a company of good men who accept the Divine Message. The Rejecters are punished and the believers receive God's favours. The *Sūrah* proceeds to cite the case of Patriarch Abraham who was visited by certain messengers who came to tell him that a dreadful fate awaited the people of Lot because of their iniquities and unnatural and highly immoral practices. Next, it briefly refers to the punishment that overtook Pharaoh, 'Ād, Thamūd and the people of Noah. Towards the end the *Sūrah* draws pointed attention to the supreme object of man's creation which is to cultivate and demonstrate in himself Divine attributes, and to discharge fully and faithfully his obligations to God and his fellow beings.



ADH-DHĀRIYĀT

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious the Merciful. **3889**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By those that scatter *with a true* scattering, **3890**

وَالذَّرِيَّتِ ذَرَّوْا ②

3. Then carry the load. **3891**

فَالْحُمِلَتْ وَقَرَّأ ③

4. Then speed lightly along, **3892**

فَالْجَرِيَّتِ يُسْرًا ④

5. And then distribute by command **3893**

فَالْمَقْسَمَتِ أَمْرًا ⑤

^aSee 1:1.

3889. Commentary:

See 1:1.

3890. Important Words:

For the meanings of the particle *واو* (by), and for the philosophy of the Quranic oaths see 37:2; 50:2 and 91:2.

الذاريات (those that scatter) is the plural of ذارية which is act. part. From ذرو or ذرى. They say ذرى الشيء i.e. the thing flew in the air. أذرى الريح التراب means, the wind raised, carried away or dispersed the dust. الذاريات means, the winds that raise or carry away or disperse, or the angels that cause the scattering away of the created things. ذرواً which is infinitive noun is added to the الذاريات to add intensiveness to the meaning or to complete it (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

For a collective note on this and the next three verses see v. 5 below.

3891. Important Words:

وقراً (load) is derived from قر which

means, (1) he was or became dull of hearing; (2) he or it was or became still or motionless; he rested; (3) he was or became grave, staid, steady, sedate or calm. They say وقرت النخلة او وقرت i.e. the palm tree became laden or heavily laden with fruit. أو قره الدين means, debt burdened him or burdened him heavily. وقر (wiqrun) means, a load, a heavy load; a weight that is carried upon the back or head; a cloud laden with water. وقر (waqrun) means, a heaviness in the ear; or dullness of hearing; entire loss of hearing (Lane & Aqrab).

3892. Commentary:

See next verse.

3893. Commentary:

From a phenomenon in physical nature the four verses (2-5) draw attention to a parallel spiritual phenomenon. The parallelism is striking. The four words الذاريات (those that scatter), الحاملات (those that carry),

6. Surely, that which you are promised is true^a; **3894**

إِنَّمَا تُوْعَدُونَ لَصَادِقٌ ۖ

7. And the Judgement will surely come to pass.

وَأَنَّ الدِّينَ لَوَاقِعٌ ۖ

8. And by the heaven *full* of tracks, **3895**

وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْجُبِّ ۚ

^b52:8.

الجارريات (those that speed lightly along) and المقسمات (those that distribute), when pointing to the physical phenomenon, may stand for winds that scatter far and wide the vapours that rise from the oceans, carry the clouds laden with rainwater, blow gently and then cause rain to fall on dry, parched and burnt land and turn it into a smiling, blooming and blossoming piece of earth, full of verdure, beautiful flowers and sweet fruits. These four words may also stand for the band of righteous men who drinking deep at the spiritual fountain that the Holy Prophet caused to flow: and after; assimilating and becoming impregnated with the beautiful and life-giving Quranic teaching, went to the remote corners of Arabia and afterwards to far-off lands, carrying their blessed load, and scattering the revealed Word of God in countries, reeking with polytheistic beliefs and immoral practices—not with the sword but with love and peace, like winds that blow gently and carry rain to withered land.

3894. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the holy men of God referred to in the preceding four verses will discharge their sacred obligations fully and

faithfully, and will thus fulfil prophecies concerning the spread and triumph of Islam. This fact will show that the promise about life after death and about the Resurrection was true.

3895. Important Words:

حبيكة (tracks) is the plural of حبيكة (and حباك) which is derived from حيك. They say حيكه i.e. he tried it, and made it firm; he wore it firmly and well. حبيكة means, the track of the stars, the streak or track in the sky; the path or way. حيك السماء means, the tracks, paths, ways in the heaven. حباك means, the black thread with which are sewn the borders of a cloth: a streak or line; the ripples of sand. حيك الماء means, the ripples of water (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Tracks or paths of heaven (حيك السماء) are the orbits of planets, comets, and stars with which the vault of heaven is strewn. These celestial bodies float, in their respective orbits performing their allotted tasks regularly, punctually and unerringly, without trespassing on one another's sphere of action and all united forming a glorious harmony of structure and motion. That the heaven is full of such tracks on which planets and stars travel, was a discovery made to

9. Truly you are discordant in what you say.³⁸⁹⁶

إِنَّكُمْ لَفِي قَوْلٍ مُّخْتَلِفٍ ۝٩

10. He *alone* is turned away from *the truth* who is decreed to be turned away.³⁸⁹⁷

يُؤْفَكْ عَنْهُ مَنْ أُفِكَ ۝١٠

11. Cursed be the liars,³⁸⁹⁸

قَتَلَ الْخَرُصُونَ ۝١١

12. Who are heedless of truth in the depth of ignorance.³⁸⁹⁹

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ سَاهُونَ ۝١٢

the world by the Quran at a time when it was believed that the heavens were solid in their formation. Does not this fact alone constitute an argument in support of the Quran being the revealed Word of God?

3896. Commentary:

The verse means to say that the great astronomical truth revealed in the preceding verse leads to the inference that the Quran is God's own revealed Word and that there exists a unity of purpose and harmony in Divine work, and yet the materialistic philosophers coin far-fetched theories, groping and floundering in ill-founded surmises and conjectures, not believing in God's Word and His Prophet.

3897. Commentary:

The expression *من أُنك* means, he on account of whose evil and wilful conduct the Divine Decree that he should be turned away from truth comes into operation. Or it means, he who himself would turn away.

3898. Important Words:

الخراصون (liars) is the plural of *خارص* (*kharrāṣ*) which is the intensive form of *خارص* which is act. part. from *خرص*

which means, he lied, he said what was untrue. *النخل خرص* means, he computed by conjecture the quantity of the fruit upon the palm-trees. *وخرص* (*takharraṣa*) means, he forged a lie. *خارص* means, a liar and *خراص* a great liar (Lane & Aqrab).

3899. Important Words:

غمرة (depth of ignorance) is derived from *غمر* (*ghamara*). They say *غمره الماء* i.e. the water rose above him and submerged him. *غمر عليه* means, he fainted or swooned. *غمر الرجل* (*ghamora*) means, the man was ignorant or inexperienced in the affair. *غمرة* means, depth or flood of ignorance; error; obstinacy and perplexity; overwhelming heedlessness or ignorance; a state of obstinate perseverance in a vain and false thing; water that rises above the stature of a man (Lane & Aqrab).

سَاهُونَ (heedless) is the plural of *سَاهٍ* (or *سهوان*) and is derived from *سها*. They say *سها فيه او سها عنه* i.e. he was or became unmindful, forgetful, neglectful or heedless of it or inadvertent to it, his mind adverting to another thing or affair or case. According to some these two expressions slightly differ in their significations; *سها فيه* meaning,

13. They ask: 'When will be the Day of Judgement?'^a **3900**

يَسْأَلُونَ أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الدِّينِ ^ط ١٣

14. Say, 'It will be the day when they will be tormented at the Fire.' **3901**

يَوْمَ هُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ يُفْتَنُونَ ١٤

15. 'Taste ye your torment. This is what you would hasten.'^b

ذُوقُوا فِتْنَتَكُمْ ^ط هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ١٥

16. But surely the righteous will be in the midst of gardens and springs^c, **3902**

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ^ط ١٦

17. Receiving what their Lord will bestow upon them; for they used to do good before that. **3903**

أَخْذِينَ مَا آتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ^ط إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ ١٧

^a7:188; 79:43. ^b22:48; 26:205; 27:72-73; 29:54-55. ^c15:46; 52:18; 68:35; 77:42; 78:32.

he neglected the thing and سَهَا عَنْهُ means, he neglected the thing knowingly (Lane & Aqrab).

3900. Commentary:

The verse may mean: (1) They ask, in derision or scoffingly, when the Day of Judgement will be? (2) Their behaviour, conduct or attitude shows that they do not believe in the Day of Judgement.

3901. Commentary:

In the preceding verse the disbelievers were mentioned as asking mockingly, "When will be the Day of Judgement?" Here they are answered with a retort that "It will be the day when they will be burned in the fire."

3902. Commentary:

As against those who flounder in the welter of wrong beliefs and evil

deeds and deny the possibility of the Day of Judgement, the righteous and the God-fearing will reside in heavenly gardens, full of springs and streams—the spiritual embodiments of the good deeds they had done in this life.

3903. Commentary:

Two different words have been used in the preceding and the present verse for the righteous believers—مُتَّقِينَ (God-fearing) and (those who do good). A متقى is one who discharges his obligations faithfully and fully to God and man, and a محسن is he who does more good to others than the good he receives from them and acts and behaves as though he is actually seeing God or, in a lesser degree, he is conscious of God watching over him. Thus a محسن is a person of higher spiritual stature than a متقى.

18. They used to sleep but a little of the night^a; **3904**

19. And at the dawn of the day they sought forgiveness^b;

20. And in their wealth was a share for one who asked for help and *for* one who could not^c. **3905**

21. And in the earth are Signs for those who have certainty of faith,

22. And *also* in your own selves. Will you not then see?

23. And in heaven is your sustenance^d, and *also* that which you are promised. **3906**

كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِّلْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

^a32:17. ^b3:18. ^c70:25-26, ^d40:14; 45:6.

3904. Important Words:

يهجعون (they used to sleep) is derived from هجع which means, he slept or slept in the night. هجوع is sleeping at night and هجود is sleeping in the day time, or remaining awake (Lane & Aqrab). See also 17:80 and 73:7.

3905. Commentary:

In the wealth of a rich Muslim, according to Islam, those who can express their needs also, as those who cannot, have a share, as of right. Thus a Muslim's wealth is a trust to the benefit of which the poor are also entitled. Elsewhere the Quran says: "And give the relatives their rightful share in your property and to the poor and the needy" (17:26). So when a Muslim meets the needs of a poor brother, he does him no special favour but only discharges the

obligation he owes to him and returns to him what was his due.

The word المحروم (those who cannot express their needs) not only includes in its connotation those poor people who, from a sense of self-respect or a feeling of shame, are prevented from asking (2:274), but also dumb animals. The word, therefore, has been taken here as signifying a person who is debarred from earning his livelihood due to physical infirmity or some other similar cause.

رزق (sustenance) signifies both physical as well as spiritual sustenance. The words "that which you are promised" may signify promises of triumph and prosperity to believers and warnings to disbelievers.

3906. Commentary:

Wonderful indeed is the creation of

24. And by the Lord of the heaven and the earth, it is certainly the truth, even as you speak.³⁹⁰⁷

فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ مِثْلِ
مَا أَنْتُمْ تَنْطِقُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

R. 2.

25. Has the story of Abraham's honoured guests reached thee^a?
3908

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
الْمُكْرَمِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

^a11:70; 15:52.

the universe. But much more wonderful is the creation of man, its centre and apex. There are signs in the creation of the physical universe and in that of man—the universe in miniature—to show that truth triumphs and prevails in the long run and falsehood suffers defeat and discomfiture.

3907. Commentary:

The verse means that the fact mentioned in the preceding verse is neither wishful thinking on the Holy Prophet's part, nor is it a figment of his imagination, but is solid and hard truth as sure and true as "you speak". Or the verse may mean that the Quran is as undoubtedly God's own revealed Word as "you speak."

3908. Commentary:

In the foregoing verses an implied reference was made to the great moral revolution that was to be brought about in the Arabian society through the selfless efforts of a band of holy men who were to carry the Message of Islam to the ends of the earth. The verse under comment and those that follow treat the same subject from a

different angle. Here history is introduced and the examples of the Prophets Abraham, and Moses, and those of the people of Noah and of 'Ād and Thamūd have been briefly mentioned.

There seems to exist some difference of opinion among commentators of the Quran as to who these honoured guests were. Some hold them to be angels; others think that they were righteous men of the locality who had come to inform Abraham that the time of the punishment of Lot's people had arrived, and to take Lot to a place of safety. The idea that they were angels might have arisen from the fact that they have been called "Our messengers" in the Quran (11:78), and also because when food was placed before them, they refused to partake of it. But nowhere in the Quran are these "messengers" described as angels of punishment; nor do angels ever walk on earth as Divine Messengers (17:96). The mere fact that they refused to partake of the food, can lend no support to the view that they were angels. There might be other reasons for the refusal.

26. When they came to him and said, 'Peace!'^a he said, 'Peace!' They were all strangers.^b

إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا ۖ قَالَ
سَلَامٌ ۚ قَوْمٌ مُّنْكَرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. And he went quietly to his household, and brought a fatted calf,^c

فَرَاغَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ فَجَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِينٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

28. And he placed it before them. *and said*, 'Will you not eat?'³⁹⁰⁹

فَقَرَّبَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29. And he conceived a fear of them.^d They said, 'Fear not.' And^e they gave him glad tidings of the birth of a son possessing knowledge.³⁹¹⁰

فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ ۖ
وَبَشِّرُوهُ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

30. Then his wife came forward extremely embarrassed, and smote her face and said, 'A barren old woman!'^f ³⁹¹¹

فَاقْبَلَتْ امْرَأَتُهُ فِي صَرَّةٍ فَصَكَّتْ
وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ ﴿٣٠﴾

^a11:70; 15:53. ^b11:71. ^c11:70. ^d11:71; 15:53. ^e11:72; 21:73; 29:28; 37:113. ^f11:73.

3909. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse shed some light on the rules of hospitality.

3910. Important Words:

أَوْجَسَ (conceived) is derived from وُجِسَ and means, he conceived, perceived or felt a thing in his mind. See also 20:68.

Commentary:

In the present verse as also in 15:54 "the promised son." has been described as "a son endowed with knowledge," while in 37:102, he has been called "a forbearing son." In the former verses the reference is to Isaac and in the latter to Ishmael.

3911. Important Words:

صَرَّةٌ (extreme embarrassment) is derived from صر which means, it made a sound or noise or a prolonged sound he cried or raised a clamour with utmost vehemence. صرّة means, vociferation or clamour or the most vehement clamour of crying; vehemence of grief, heat or anxiety; a contraction and moroseness of the face by reason of dislike or hatred or shame; a fit (Lane & Aqrab).

صَكَتَ (smote). صَكَه means, he struck him or hit violently or he slapped him with his hand upon the back of his neck or upon his face. صَكَ الباب means, he locked the door. صَكَ وَجْهَهُ means, he slapped his face (Lane & Aqrab).

31. They said, “Even so has thy Lord said. Surely, He is the Wise, the All-Knowing.”

قَالُوا كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ إِنَّهُ هُوَ
الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣١﴾

32. Abraham said, ‘Now what is your errand,^b O ye who have been sent?’³⁹¹²

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33. They said, ‘We have been sent to a sinful people,^c

قَالُوا إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمٍ مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34. ‘That we may send down upon them stones of clay,^d

لِنُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِنْ طِينٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

35. ‘Marked,^e with thy Lord, for those guilty of excesses.’³⁹¹³

مُسَوَّمَةً عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36. And We brought forth therefrom such of the believers as were there,^f

فَأَخْرَجْنَا مَنْ كَانَ فِيهَا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37. And We found not there except one house of those who were obedient *to us*.³⁹¹⁴

فَمَا وَجَدْنَا فِيهَا غَيْرَ بَيْتٍ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38. And We left therein a Sign^g for those who fear painful punishment.

وَتَرَكْنَا فِيهَا آيَةً لِلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ ﴿٣٨﴾

^a11:74. ^b15:58. ^c15:59. ^d11:83. ^e11:84. ^f15:60; 29:33, ^g15:76; 29:36.

3912. Important Words:

خطبك (your errand). خطب means, a thing, an affair, or a business small or great; the cause or occasion of a thing or an event. They say ما خطبك i.e. what is the thing or affair or business that thou seekest or desirest to do; or what is the cause of thy coming? (Lane & Aqrab). See also 12:52.

3913. Commentary:

The Divine punishment which seized the people of Lot is variously

described in the Quran by the words حاصب i.e. storm of stones (54:35); صيحة i.e. a blast and حجارة من سجيل i.e. stones of clay (11:83). These people seemed to have been destroyed by a violent earthquake which turned parts of the earth upside down (11:83).

3914. Commentary:

The house referred to in the verse was that of Lot minus his wife, who chose to side with her disbelieving relatives and refused to go with Lot.

39. ^aAnd in the story of Moses also there were many Signs when We sent him to Pharaoh with clear authority,³⁹¹⁵

وَفِي مُوسَى إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ
بِسُلْطَنِ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

40. But he turned away from Moses on account of his power, and said, ‘A sorcerer, or a madman.’³⁹¹⁶

فَتَوَلَّىٰ بِرْكَهٖ وَقَالَ سِحْرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

41. ^bSo We seized him and his hosts and threw them into the sea; and he *himself* was to blame.

فَأَخَذْنَاهُ وَجُودَهُ فَنَبَذْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ
وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

42. And there was a Sign in the story of the tribe of ‘Ād, when We sent against them the destructive wind.^c ³⁹¹⁷

وَفِي عَادٍ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّيحَ
الْعَاقِمَةَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43. ^dIt spared nothing whatever that it came upon, but made it like a rotten bone.

مَا تَذَرُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَتَتْ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا جَعَلَتْهُ
كَالْعِظَمِ الْمُفْتَدِيٍّ ﴿٤٣﴾

^a11:97; 23:46-47; 40:24. ^b10:91; 28:41; 79:26. ^c46:25, ^d46:26.

3915. Commentary:

For the story of Moses, the Divine Message he gave to Pharaoh, for his mission of the deliverance of Israelites from a most debasing and disgraceful bondage and for the causes that led to the undoing and destruction of Pharaoh and his mighty hosts see 7:104-156; 10:76-93; 20:10-55; 26:11-69 & 28:4-45.

3916. Important Words:

بركن (power) is derived from ركن (rakana or rakina). They say ركن اليه i.e. he inclined towards him or it; he trusted or relied upon him or it so as to be or become easy or quiet in mind; he was or became firm, still,

grave, staid, sedate or calm. ركن (rukun) means, side or outward part of a thing; a stay or support; power, might and resistance, a man's kinsfolk or clan, his people or party; persons by whom he is aided and strengthened; a noble or high person. They say هو ركن من اركان قومه i.e. he is an important person among the great men of his people. The word also means, an affair of great importance; a formidable event; the essence of a thing whereby it subsists. اركان الصلوة means, the fundamentals of Prayer without which it is incomplete (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

3917. Commentary:

For the story of ‘Ād see 11:51-61

44. And a Sign there was in the story of the tribe of Thamūd when it was said to them,^a 'Enjoy yourselves for a while.'

3918

45. But they rebelled against the command of their Lord. So the thunderbolt overtook them while they gazed^b;

46. And they were not able to rise up *again*, nor could they defend themselves.³⁹¹⁹

47. And *We destroyed* the people of Noah before *them*; they were a disobedient people.³⁹²⁰

R. 3.

48. And We have built the heaven with *Our own* hands, and verily We have vast powers.³⁹²¹

وَفِي ثَمُودَ إِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَمَتَّعُوا حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

فَعَتَوْا عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصُّعْقَةُ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا مِنْ قِيَامٍ وَمَا كَانُوا مُتَنْصِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَسِيقِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

^a11:66, ^b11:68.

and 26:124-141.

3918. Commentary:

For a detailed note on Thamūd see 11:62 and 26:142.

3919. Important Words:

منتصرين (defend themselves) is derived from انتصر which means, he gained victory and power; he defended himself. They say انتصر من عدو i.e. he took revenge from his enemy. انتصر على عدوه means, he triumphed over his enemy (Lane & Aqrab).

3920. Commentary:

For a somewhat detailed account of

Noah see 11:37-50.

3921. Important Words:

أيد (hands) is plural of يد which has a vast variety of meanings, some of which are: (1) benefit, bounty, favour; (2) power, might, influence; dignity, rank or status; (3) assistance, help, protection; (4) possessions, wealth; (5) host, army; etc. See also 38:46. بين يديه means, before him, in his presence. مالك عليه يد means, you have no power or influence over him. سقط في يده means, he was smitten with remorse, he repented. هذا في يدي means, it is in my possession. بنيناها بأيدي may mean, We have created it with power and might,

49. ^aAnd the earth We have spread out, and *how* excellently We lay it out!’

50. And of everything have We created pairs^b, that you may reflect.³⁹²²

51. Flee ye therefore unto Allah. Surely, I am a plain Warner unto you from Him.^c ³⁹²³

52. And do not set up another god along with Allah.^d Surely, I am a plain Warner unto you from Him.³⁹²⁴

وَالْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنَاهَا فَنِعْمَ الْمِهْدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

فَفِرُّوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ ۖ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٥١﴾

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ ۖ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٥٢﴾

^a2:23; 20:54; 78:7. ^b13:4; 36:37. ^c22:50; 26:116; 29:51; 67:27. ^d23:118; 50:27.

or We have made the heaven as a manifestation of Our power and might (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse makes pointed reference to God’s marvellous handiwork—the universe, creation of which leads directly to the object of the creation of man, who is the aim and object of its creation and its acme and apex. In the creation of the heavens and the earth there is proof of many Divine attributes, the prominent being His Glory, Might and Majesty.

3922. Commentary:

The verse implies a subtle allusion to the object of man’s creation, one of the main themes of the *Sūrah*. The verse, like several other Quranic verses states that God has created all things in pairs. There are pairs not only in animal life, but also in vegetables, and even in inanimate things. There are pairs also in

spiritual things. Even heaven and earth make a pair. Unless water comes from heaven and the sun gives warmth and light to the earth there can be no vegetation. Similarly, the human soul, which has been compared to earth in the foregoing verses, can find no scope for the manifestation of its latent and inherent powers and attributes unless the light of revelation descends upon it.

3923. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that if believers really wish to establish a real and permanent connection with God, the best way to achieve it is to seek His help and protection and guidance. In this lies the quintessence of the Message which all Divine Prophets have given to the world.

3924. Commentary:

True and unadulterated belief in Oneness and Unity is the pivotal and primal fact of all religions.

53. Even so there came no Messenger to those before them, but they said, ‘A sorcerer, or a madman!’

كَذَلِكَ مَا آتَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
مِّنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالُوا سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مُجُنُّونٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

54. Have they bequeathed this *attitude* as a legacy to one another? Nay, they are *all* a rebellious people.³⁹²⁵

أَتَوَصَّوهُمْ بِمَا هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُوتٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

55. So turn away from them; and there will be no blame on thee.

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَمَا أَنْتَ بِمَلُومٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

56. And keep on exhorting; for verily, exhortation benefits those who would believe.

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَ تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57. And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.³⁹²⁶

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾

3925. Commentary:

So strikingly similar are the charges levelled against Divine Reformers by their opponents in all ages that it seems they bequeathed it as a legacy to their successors to go on repeating those accusations.

3926. Important Words:

ليعبدون (they may worship Me) is derived from عبد (‘abada). عبد الله means, he served, worshipped or adored God alone or he rendered to God humble obedience. عبد (‘abuda) means, he was or became a slave, his forefathers having been so before him. عبد به means, he clave to it or him. عبده (‘abbada) means, he enslaved him; he subdued him so that he did the work of slaves. عبد الطريق means, he trod the road so as to make it even or

easy to walk or ride upon. عبد البعير means, he subdued or rendered the camel submissive (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary:

The primary signification of the word عبادة (‘Ibādat) as shown under Important Words above, is to subject oneself to a rigorous spiritual discipline, working with all one’s inherent powers and capacities to their fullest scope, in perfect harmony with and in obedience to God’s design, so as to receive the Divine impress and thus be able to manifest in oneself God’s attributes. This is, as stated in the present verse, the great and noble aim and object of man’s creation and this is exactly what worship of God means. The external

58. I desire no sustenance from them, nor do I desire that they

مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ

and internal endowments of human nature give us clearly to understand that of God-given faculties the highest is the one which awakens in man the urge to search after God and incites in him the noble desire completely to submit himself to His will. This being the great object of man's existence the Quran has not failed to prescribe ways and means to attain it.

The first means towards the attainment of this end is right knowledge and firm faith in a Living God and the recognition and realization of His beauty and goodness, because beauty and goodness are the two incentives to love (1:2-4 & 14:35).

Another important means to realize this noble end is prayer. Repeated stress has been laid upon prayer in the Quran because man can reach God only with Divine help and assistance (40:61).

Without *mujāhadah* it is idle even to conceive of attaining this end. *Mujāhadah* consists in seeking God by spending one's money and time and applying one's faculties, and sacrificing one's life as well as using one's knowledge and wisdom in the cause of God (9:41; 2:4 & 29:70).

Fitful or lopsided effort produces no lasting results. It is unwavering perseverance and constancy in his endeavours which are needed for a spiritual wayfarer to reach his goal.

He should be indefatigable and untiring in the way in which he walks and should remain steadfast under the hardest trials (41:31). When adversities encompass a man all around and when he is threatened with loss of life, property and honour in the way of God, and death stares him in the face and the last ray of hope departs, it is then that perseverance must be shown (2:208). It is such perseverance that leads one to God.

Another important means to attain this supreme object is to keep company with the righteous and to imitate their example because man is by nature inclined to imitate a model and he constantly feels the need of it (9:119).

Last but perhaps the most important factor which helps man to attain this great and noble object are pure dreams, visions and revelations from God. As the road which leads to God is very mysterious and intricate and is full of difficulties and dangers, the spiritual wayfarer may depart from the right course or despair of attaining the goal. The grace of God, therefore, continues to encourage and strengthen him in his spiritual journey with inspiring visions and revelations, and animates him with a still more zealous desire to pursue his journey eagerly. Thus strengthened he proceeds upon his journey with great vigour and zeal (10:65).

should feed Me.^a 3927

أَنْ يُطْعِمُونِ ٥٨

59. Surely, it is Allah *Himself* Who is the Great Sustainer, the Lord of Power, the Strong.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ ٥٩

60. So the fate of those who do wrong shall surely be like the fate of their fellows of old; so let them not ask Me to hasten on *the punishment*.³⁹²⁸

فَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ذُنُوبًا مِّثْلَ ذُنُوبِ أَصْحَابِهِمْ فَلَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ٦٠

61. ^bWoe, then, to those who disbelieve, because of that day of theirs which they have been promised.

فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ يَوْمِهِمُ الَّذِي يُوعَدُونَ ٦١

^a6:15; 20:133. ^b14:3; 19:38; 38:28.

3927. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that if the spiritual wayfarer pursues his course towards the noble object of his life steadfastly and with perseverance, he does no good to God, or to anybody else, but himself profits from it and attains the object of his quest. It is in a life led in obedience to, and harmony with, Divine laws that lie his spiritual development and the attainment of everlasting and eternal life.

3928. Important Words:

ذنوب (lot) is derived from ذنب. They

say ذنبه i.e. he followed his tail, not quitting his track. ذنوب means; a great bucket; a bucket full of water or nearly full of water (an empty bucket is called دلو); fate, lot, share or portion; requital. The word also signifies a day of prolonged evil (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse warns disbelievers that if they persisted in their evil course, they will meet with a fate similar to that of the opponents of former Prophets. Like them they will come to a sad end.

CHAPTER 52

AT-ṬŪR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This *Sūrah*, like its two predecessors, was revealed at Mecca in the early period of the Call. Nöldeke places it after chapter 51, while according to Muir it was revealed somewhat later. The contents of the *Sūrah* show that it was revealed at a time when opposition to Islam had become severe and persistent, and even plots had begun to be hatched against the life of the Holy Prophet. The *Sūrah* has 50 verses and takes its title from its second verse.

In the preceding *Sūrah* attention was drawn to the great spiritual revolution which was to be brought about by the Quran. It was in the fitness of things and quite in accordance with the laws of nature (the *Sūrah* stated) that because men had become corrupt and had forsaken God, a new Revelation should have come, like rain that descends upon dry land at the proper time and quickens it into a new life. The *Sūrah* had ended on the note that like former Prophets the Holy Prophet will meet with severe opposition, but the cause of truth will triumph and disbelievers will be punished. The present *Sūrah* refers also to the Biblical prophecies about the Holy Prophet and warns disbelievers that if they persisted in their opposition they will be seized with Divine punishment.

Summary

The *Sūrah* opens with a direct and emphatic reference to the prophecies about the Quran and the Holy Prophet in the Bible, and states that the Bible, the Quran and the Ka'bah all bear evidence to the truth of Islam and the Holy Prophet, and proceeds to warn disbelievers that opposition to truth is never productive of good results and that their power would be broken and disgrace and humiliation would be their lot. But those righteous servants of God who accept the Divine teaching and mould their lives in accordance with it would receive Divine favours. Not only they but also those of their children who followed in their footsteps and led righteous lives would be made to join with them in the Abode of Eternity.

Next, the *Sūrah* says that the Holy Prophet is neither a soothsayer, nor a madman or a poet but a true Messenger of God, because the great moral and spiritual revolution brought about by him could not be the work of a madman or a poet; nor could the great Divine Book—the Quran—that has been revealed to him, be the work of a forger of lies or a fabricator. The Quran has been revealed by the Great Creator of the heavens and the earth. The Prophet seeks no reward from them nor would their plans against him succeed because he is under God's protection. On the contrary Divine punishment would overtake disbelievers and the time of their chastisement is fast approaching.



(AT-ṬŪR)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.³⁹²⁹

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the Mount^b; ³⁹³⁰

وَالطُّورِ ②

3. And *by* the Book inscribed; ³⁹³¹

وَكِتَابٍ مَّسْطُورٍ ③

4. On parchment unfolded;³⁹³²

فِي رَقٍّ مَّنْشُورٍ ④

5. And *by* the Frequented House; ³⁹³³

وَالْبَيْتِ الْمَعْمُورِ ⑤

^aSee 1:1. ^b95:3.

3929. Commentary:

See 1:1.

3930. Commentary:

The particle *وَ* may mean: "I swear" "I cite as witness;" etc. For the philosophy, importance and significance of oaths see 37:2; 51:2 & 91:2.

الطور (the Mount) stands for Mount Sinai. For a collective note on vv. 2-7 see v. 7 below.

3931. Commentary:

The expression "a Book inscribed," may refer to both the Quran and the Book of Moses, preferably to the former.

3932. Important Words:

رق (parchment) is the substantive noun from (*raqqa*) which means, it was or became thin, delicate in texture. رقيق means, fine parchment; white or fine piece of paper or skin, used for the purpose of writing on it (Lane).

Commentary:

The words "parchment unfolded," qualify the expression, "the Book inscribed," which stands for the Quran or the Book of Moses.

3933. Important Words:

المعمور (Frequentated) is derived from عمر. They say عمر المكان i.e. he stayed in the house or he occupied, tenanted or inhabited it. عمر البناء means, he kept the building in a good state. عمر المكان means, he visited the place. دار معمورة means, an inhabited or a visited or frequented house. عمره (‘*ammara*) means, he worshipped his Creator (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The words "the Frequented House," may refer to the tabernacle that Moses had constructed in the wilderness where the Israelites worshipped, or to the Temple at Jerusalem, or to any sacred house of worship. But preferably it refers to

6. And by the Elevated Roof;

3934

وَالسَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوعِ ۝٦

7. And *by* the Swollen Sea^a;

3935

وَالْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُورِ ۝٧

^a81:7.

the Ka‘bah which is described in the Quran also as "a Resort" (2:126); "the Sacred House" (5:3); "the Sacred Mosque" (17:2); "the Ancient House" (22:30); and "the Town of Security" (95:4); etc.

3934. Commentary:

'The Elevated Roof' may also refer to the tabernacle which Moses set up in the wilderness in the form of a canopy under which the Israelites worshipped. Or it may refer to the Ka‘bah or to the sky or heaven the last reference being more appropriate and relevant.

3935. Important Words:

السجور (swollen) is derived from سجر. They say سجر الماء النهر i.e. the water filled the stream. سجر التوتى (sajjara) means, he filled the oven with firewood and heated it. سجر الماء means, he made the water to flow forth whithersoever it would. مسجور means, filled; kindled; still or quiet, or still and full at the same time; empty (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

It is the characteristic of the Quran that when it has to make a firm declaration and impart emphasis and certainty to that declaration it swears by, or cites as witnesses, certain beings or objects or natural laws or phenomena. In the first few verses the *Sūrah* swears by certain things

intimately connected with Moses—the counterpart of the Holy Prophet. It was on the Ṭūr that the revelation was vouchsafed to Moses which embodied his Law and the prophecies which spoke about the appearance of a great Divine Prophet from among the brethren of the Israelites. That Prophet was to be the like of Moses and was to shine forth from mount Paran and to come with ten thousand saints, holding in his right hand a fiery law (Deut. 18:18 & 33:2). Evidently, the Holy Prophet was the Divine Messenger spoken of in the prophecy. His advent is likened in the Quran to the advent of Moses (73:16). He shined forth from mount Paran, holding the Quran in his right hand and entered Mecca at the head of ten thousand saintly warriors. The *Sūrah* then cites, as evidence, the "Inscribed Book" which is the Bible or the Quran, preferably the latter, and which stands as a standing and incontrovertible testimony to the truth of the claims of the Holy Prophet. "The Frequented House"—the Ka‘bah,—more than anything else, shows that the religion of which it forms the citadel and the centre is God's Final Dispensation. The site where the Ka‘bah stands was a dry barren waste where no sign of human or animal life was visible. Here, long centuries ago, a holy man of God—

8. The punishment of thy Lord
shall certainly come to pass;^a

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ ۝٨

3936

9. There is none that can avert it.

مَّالَهُ مِنْ دَافِعٍ ۝٩

10. On the day when the heaven
will be in *a state of* terrific
commotion, ³⁹³⁷

يَوْمَ تَمُورُ السَّمَاءُ مَوْرًا ۝١٠

^a51:6.

the Patriarch Abraham, aided and assisted by his son, Ishmael, while raising its foundations, had prayed that the place may become a haven of safety and security and may constitute the centre from where God's Unity and Oneness may be proclaimed and preached. It was "this barren waste that didst not bear and didst not travail with child" which gave birth to the greatest son of man, as was spoken of old (Isa. 54:1). Here it was (as was foretold) that "the glory of God rose and shone; the multitudes of camels came, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah, all came from Sheba and brought gold and incense and shewed forth the praises of the Lord" (Isa. 60:1-6).

The reference in the words "the Elevated Roof," being to heaven, the verse (v.6) signifies that the disbelievers are so unwise as not to see this simple fact that whereas the Prophet continuously receives Divine help and his cause progresses and prospers, failure dogs their footsteps and all their designs and plans against the Prophet prove abortive. In the words "the Swollen Sea," the reference may be to the

Mediterranean Sea where Pharaoh and his mighty hosts were drowned while pursuing the Israelites or they may refer to the battlefield of Badr where all the great leaders of the Quraish were killed, as it was known as البحر i.e. the sea (Niḥāyah). The words may also apply to the Quran which like a fathomless sea of spiritual knowledge continues to throw out treasures of divine knowledge. "Why do not the disbelievers," the verse purports to say, "take a lesson from these patent facts and realize that opposition to God's Messengers does not pay and will end in their ruin?"

3936. Commentary:

All the facts mentioned in the preceding six verses show that if disbelievers do not give up their evil ways and opposition to the Holy Prophet, Divine punishment would descend upon them and would break them to pieces. "The punishment of thy Lord," may also refer to the punishment of the Day of Resurrection.

3937. Commentary:

The verse may signify that on that

11. And the mountains will move, fast,^a 3938

وَتَسِيرُ الْجِبَالُ سَيْرًا^ط

12. Then woe that day to those who reject the truth,

فَوَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ^ط

13. Who indulge in idle talk for pastime.

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي خَوْضٍ يَلْعَبُونَ^ط

14. The day when they shall be thrust into the fire of Hell with a violent thrust.^b 3939

يَوْمَ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ دَعَاً^ط

15. 'This is the Fire which you treated as a lie.'^c

هَذِهِ النَّارُ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ بِهَا تَكْذِبُونَ^ط

16. Is this then magic, or do you still not see?³⁹⁴⁰

أَفَسِحْرٌ هَذَا أَمْ أَنْتُمْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ^ط

17. Burn ye therein; and whether you show patience or

إِصْلَوْهَا فَاصْبِرُوا أَوْ لَا تَصْبِرُوا^ط

^a18:48; 78:21; 81:4. ^b18:54; 21:40; 38:86. ^c51:15; 55:44.

day all the heavenly forces will operate in favour of the Holy Prophet. So did it happen on the Day of Badr.

3938. Commentary:

The verse means that on the day of retribution the leaders of disbelievers will meet with a terrible end. They will be blown away like chaff before the wind. Or it may signify that the Iranian and Byzantine Empires will be broken and shattered. This and the preceding verse make a subtle allusion to the new order of things before which the old decrepit and decayed systems would be swept away. These verses may also apply to the Day of Judgement.

3939. Commentary:

The dead bodies of leaders of the Quraish who were killed in the Battle of Badr were thrown into a pit and

the Holy Prophet went up to its edge and, addressing the dead bodies, is reported to have said "Did you find the promise of punishment of your Lord true? What God had promised me has been fulfilled" (Bukhārī & Ṭabarī). The verse is equally applicable to the punishment which will be meted out to disbelievers on the Resurrection Day.

3940. Commentary:

When disbelievers will be confronted with the consequences of their evil deeds on the Day of Reckoning, they will be asked if they had realized that what God's Messengers had told them was not a fake or forgery, or whether they still did not see the utter futility and falsity of their beliefs and doctrines. The verse may also refer to the day or reckoning for disbelievers in this life.

you show it not, it will be the same for you.^a You are requited *only* for what you used to do.’

3941

18. ^bVerily, the righteous will surely be in Gardens and in bliss,³⁹⁴²

19. Enjoying what their Lord has bestowed on them; and their Lord will save them from the torment of the Fire.

20. *And will say to them*, ‘Eat and drink in happiness because of what you used to do.

21. ^c‘Reclining on couches arranged in rows.’ ^dAnd We shall consort them with fair maidens having wide, *beautiful* eyes.³⁹⁴³

سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ءِأَمَّا تُجْرُونَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَعِيمٍ ﴿١٨﴾

فُكِهِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ؕ وَوَقَّهْمُ رَبُّهُمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٩﴾

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

مُتَكِّينَ عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَّصْفُوفَةٍ ﴿٢١﴾ وَزَوَّجْنَاهُمْ بِحُورٍ عِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

^a14:22; 41:25. ^b7:44; 15:46; 19:64; 43:73-74; 44:56; 77:42-43; 78:32-33. ^c18:32; 55:55; 76:14.

^d44:55; 56:23.

3941. Commentary:

The verse depicts the disbelievers’ condition after their guilt will be fully established and the time for repentance will have passed.

3942. Commentary:

The present and the following verses recount some of the Divine favours and blessings that are bestowed on the righteous. These may also be taken as embodying a prophecy which was literally fulfilled when the dwellers of the barren and sandy deserts of Arabia conquered the great Iranian and Byzantine Empires.

3943. Important Words:

زوج الشيء بالشيء (We shall consort). زوجنا (zawwaja) means, he paired or coupled a thing with a thing; united it as its fellow or like. يزوجهم ذكرانا واناثا means, He mixes them as males and females; He makes them pairs, males or females; He makes them in different sorts or sexes (42:51). اذا النفوس زوجت means, when the souls shall be united or when people are brought together. زوج means, any sort of thing; sort or species; a woman’s husband or a man’s wife; mate, consort, comrade; class. أزواج (plural) means, species; classes or groups; mates; pairs; etc.

(Lane, Aqrab, Tāj & Mufradāt). احشروا الذين ظلموا وأزواجهم means, assemble those who acted wrongly along with their companions (37:23).

حوراء is the plural of both أحور and حوراء which are derived from حار. They say حار الثوب i.e. he washed the cloth and made it white. أحور (fem. حوراء) means, a man whose eyes are characterized by the quality termed حور (*hawarun*), i.e. intense whiteness of the white of the eye and intense blackness of the black thereof, with intense whiteness or fairness of the rest of the person. أحور also means, pure or clear intellect. ما يعيش بأحور is said of a person whose affairs are not clean (Lane, Mufradāt & Tāj).

عين is the plural of both أعين (*a'yan*) and عيناء which are derived from عين (*'ayina*) which means, he had wide black eyes. أعين and عيناء respectively mean, man and woman having black, wide and large eyes. عيناء also means, a good or beautiful saying or word (Lane, Mufradāt & Tāj).

Commentary:

Description of the rewards and punishments of Heaven and Hell as given in some Quranic *Sūrah*s, particularly in Ar-Raḥmān, Al-Wāqī'ah and in the present *Sūrah* call for an explanatory note. The following points may be borne in mind for an appreciation of life after death:

1. According to the Quran, God's handiwork as manifested in the creation of the universe, and in that of man placed at its centre, shows that man's life on earth has a purpose higher and nobler and beyond mere eating and drinking or leading a more

or less circumscribed existence (23:115-116).

2. There is a life after death and that life is the continuation of the life which man leads in this world. One's heaven or hell begins from this very world; death only opening up vast and unknown vistas of ever-expanding spiritual progress.

3. As soon as the human soul leaves this tabernacle of clay, it is given a new body, because the soul can make no progress or enjoy no bliss or feel no pain without a body. Its development and progress depend upon its permanent connection with a body. The new body is as fine and delicate as the soul was in this world. In fact, it is the very soul in a new transformation which after having passed through certain experiences develops a new soul which possesses far higher and finer and more delicate faculties and perception than the soul from which it emanates. To this new soul the old soul serves as a body and man is able to perceive things through his new senses which he could perceive formerly only through the soul, and is able to partake of the pains and pleasures of the next world—the present body of clay being quite unfit for the new experience. That is why the Quran says, "And no soul knows what joy of the eyes is kept hidden for them, as a reward for their good works" (32:18). And the Holy Prophet explained this Quranic verse in a well-known saying. viz. "No eye has seen the blessings of Paradise, nor has any ear heard of them nor can human mind conceive of them" (Bukhārī, *Kitāb*

22. And those who believe and whose children follow them in faith—with them shall We join their children.^a And We will not diminish anything from the

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ
بِإِيمَانٍ الْحَقْنَابِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ وَمَا
الْتَنَاهُمْ مِّنْ عَمَلِهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ ط

^a40:9.

bad'ul-khalq).

4. Life after death is only an image and manifestation of the present life and the rewards and punishments of the next world would be only embodiments and images of the actions done in this life. Heaven and Hell are not new material worlds which come from outside. It is true that they shall be visible and palpable, call them material, if you please, but they are only embodiments of the spiritual facts of this life. The spiritual torture of this world has been represented in the Quran as a physical punishment in the next. The chains to be put round the necks of disbelievers, for instance, represent the desires of this world which keep a man's head bent upon the earth, and it is these desires that shall assume the shape of chains. Similarly, the entanglements of this world shall be seen as fetters on the feet in the next. The heart-burning of this world shall likewise be clearly seen as flames of burning fire, and the love which a believer feels for his Lord and Creator will appear embodied as wine in the life to come, etc. Thus there will be gardens, streams, milk, honey, flesh of birds, wine, fruits, thrones, companions and many other things in Paradise; but they will not be the things of this

world but the embodiments of spiritual facts of the life of this world.

5. There will be no sin, levity, or vain talk in Paradise, no pleasures of the flesh as we understand them, but all-pervading peace and pleasure of God (56:26-27). In view of this Quranic conception of Paradise, it is the height of ignorance or blind prejudice to suggest that the Quran promises a sensuous Paradise to its followers.

Moreover, the words *وعين زوجنا* and as explained under Important Words above, present no difficulty and, in view of these explanations, the verse may mean that in Paradise the righteous servants of God will be made to live with pure and clean companions whose faces will be shining with radiant spiritual beauty; or they will have as companions fair maidens, i.e. their wives.

Besides, the promise, made to the righteous in this and the following verses, was literally fulfilled when the Muslims conquered vast territories of the Byzantine and Iranian Empires, and all these things fell into their hands and thus the promise constituted an incontrovertible testimony to the fact that the promise about the next life is also true.

reward of their works. Every man stands pledged for what he has earned.³⁹⁴⁴

23. And We shall bestow upon them *every kind* of fruit^a and meat such as they will wish for.

24. There they will pass from one to another a cup wherein is neither levity nor sin.^b ³⁹⁴⁵

25. ^cAnd there will wait upon them youths of their own, *pure* as though they were pearls well-preserved.³⁹⁴⁶

كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِيْنٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَأَمْدَدْنَهُمْ بِفَاكِهَةٍ وَلَحْمٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

يَتَنَازَعُونَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا لَا لَغْوٌ فِيهَا وَلَا تَأْتِيْمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَيُطَوَّفُ عَلَيْهِمْ غُلَمَانٌ لَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لُؤْلُؤٌ مَّكْنُونٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

^a55:12; 56:21. ^b19:63; 56:26; 78:36. ^c56:18; 76:20.

3944. Important Words:

ذرية (children) is derived from ذر. They say ذر الله عباده في الارض i.e. God spread His servants upon the earth. ذرية used as both singular and plural (ذريات—plural) means, children or offspring of a man, male or female; little ones or young ones; descendants; progenitors or ancestors, women (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

This verse further explains its predecessor. Whereas in the former verse it was stated that the righteous will be made to live with their pure, beautiful wives, this verse explains that their offspring will also be united with them, thus making their joy complete.

The words "Every man stands pledged for what he has earned," remove one possible misunderstanding, viz. that the mere

fact of being related to a righteous man would do the believer no good. It is his own good works that will earn him his place in Paradise. The verse clearly speaks of man's responsibility for his actions.

3945. Important Words:

يتنازعون (will pass from one to another) is derived from نزع. They say نازع فلانا i.e. he shook hands with such a one. نازع الكأس means, he took the cup. تنازعوا الكأس means, they took the cup from one another's hand (Aqrab).

3946. Commentary:

غلمان (youths) is plural of غلام which means, youth; servant; son, etc. (Lane & Aqrab). The word has also been used in the Quran synonymously with ولد in the sense of 'son' (3:41; 15:54; 19:8; 37:102; 51:29). Elsewhere in the Quran (76:20) the word ولدان (sons) has been substituted for غلمان

26. And they will turn to one another, asking each other questions.

وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. They will say, 'Before this, when we were among our family, we were very much afraid of God's displeasure.'³⁹⁴⁷

قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِي أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28. 'But Allah has been gracious unto us and has saved us from the torment of the burning blast.'^a

فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَّنَا عَذَابَ السَّمُومِ ﴿٢٨﴾

29. 'We used to pray to Him before. Surely, He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.'

إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٩﴾

R. 2.

30. Admonish then. By the grace of thy Lord, thou art neither a soothsayer,^b nor a madman.³⁹⁴⁸

فَذَكِّرْ فَمَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَتِ رَبِّكَ بِكَاهِنٍ وَلَا مَجْنُونٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

^a44:57. ^b69:43.

which shows that the youths who will move about in the company of the righteous in Paradise will be their own sons. The verse may also refer to the Divine promise of great wealth and power coming into the possession of the poor Muslims, and to the hosts of servants who were to wait upon them.

3947. Commentary:

Besides the meaning given in the text the verse may also signify: "Being surrounded by enemies, their threats would sometimes frighten and terrify us. But now we enjoy perfect peace and security."

3948. Commentary:

In the foregoing verses prophecies in former revealed Scriptures, particularly in the Book of Moses, were advanced as arguments to support and substantiate the truth of the Quran being the revealed Word of God. Those prophecies spoke of the appearance of a Prophet in the wilderness of Mecca and having a "Fiery Law" in his right hand (Deut. 33:2). In the present and the following several verses, however, the testimony of reason, common sense and human conscience has been adduced as proof to serve the same purpose.

31. Do they say, 'He is a poet,'^a we are waiting for some calamity which time will bring upon him?'³⁹⁴⁹

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَّتَرَبَّصُ بِهِ رَيْبَ
الْمُنُونِ ۖ

32. Say, ^b'Await ye then! I too am with you among those who are waiting.'³⁹⁵⁰

قُلْ تَرَبَّصُوا فَإِنِّي مَعَكُمْ مِّنَ
الْمُتَرَبِّصِينَ ۖ

^a21:6; 69:42. ^b9:52; 32:31.

3949. Important Words:

مراب (calamity) is inf. noun from مراب. They say مرابني i.e. it or he occasioned in me disquiet or agitation of mind; he made me to doubt; he did with me what I disliked or hated. مراب means, doubt; disquietude or uneasiness of mind; doubt combined with evil opinion; calamity; misery (Lane & Aqrab).

من (time) is derived from من (manna). They say من الرجل i.e. he weakened the man and took away his strength; من الحبل means, he cut off the rope. من الشيء means, the thing diminished. من الناقة means, he tired out or jaded the she-camel. منون means, death; time; destiny or fate. مراب المنون or مراب الدهر means, the calamities or vicissitudes of time (Lane).

تربص (we are waiting for) is derived from تربص. They say به تربص i.e. he waited for good or evil, particularly the latter, to befall him. به الامر means, he expected or waited for the event to befall him (Lane & Aqrab). An Arab poet says:

تربص بها ربيب المنون لعلها

تطلق يوماً أو يموت حليلها

i.e. wait thou for the vicissitudes of time to befall her; perhaps she might be divorced some day or her husband

might die (Lane).

Commentary:

The Holy Prophet's enemies accused him of being a soothsayer, a poet and even a madman. The verse implies the refutation of all these foolish charges. The Prophet is not a poet (the verse purports to say) because poets have no fixed ideal or programme in life. They only indulge in daydreaming, and as it were, "wander about distractedly in every valley" (26:226), but the Holy Prophet has before him a great and noble aim—the regeneration of a corrupt and degenerate society. He is neither a soothsayer, because soothsayers dabble in occult sciences and make mere conjectures and guesses. They try to hoodwink simple-minded people by clever contrivances but the Holy Prophet is universally known to be an honest and sincere man. Nor is he a madman because madmen are not known to have brought about the great and wonderful revolution that he has, among his completely demoralized, degenerate and degraded people.

3950. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that disbelievers call the Holy Prophet a

33. Do their intellect *and reason* enjoin this upon them or are they a rebellious people?³⁹⁵¹

أَمْ تَأْمُرُهُمْ أَحْلَامُهُمْ بِهَذَا أَمْ هُمْ
قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34. "Do they say, 'He has fabricated it?' Nay, but they would not believe.³⁹⁵²

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ تَقَوَّلَهُ ۚ بَلْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35. Let them, then, bring forth a discourse like this, if they speak the truth'.³⁹⁵³

فَلْيَأْتُوا بِحَدِيثٍ مِّثْلِهِ إِنْ كَانُوا
صَادِقِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

^a2:24; 10:39; 11:14; 17:89.

poet, who indulges in building castles in the air about his great future, a soothsayer who plays upon the credulity of simple-minded folk, a raving maniac and, as such, naturally they expect that sooner or later he will come to a sad end. The Prophet is enjoined to tell them that they will have to wait till Doomsday for the realization of their futile expectations. Time alone will decide the issue between them.

3951. Commentary:

The words of the verse seem to have been spoken ironically. Even after seeing that the Holy Prophet has given a teaching which has brought about such a wonderful revolution among his people and that his mission is meeting with rapid and progressive success, does the disbelievers' intellect lead them to the conclusion that he is a poet, a soothsayer or a madman? Is it their reason that has misled them or have they thrown all restraint and moderation to the winds, and in rejecting the Divine Message have transgressed all legitimate bounds?

3952. Important Words:

تقول (he has forged) is derived from قال i.e. he said. تقول على means, he lied against me; he attributed to me a thing which I did not say (Lane & Aqrab).

3953. Commentary:

The verse refutes the disbelievers' allegation of forgery against the Holy Prophet. If the Prophet (the verse seems to hold out a challenge to them) receives no revelations from God and the Quran is his own fabrication, then let them produce a book like it which should possess such a simple and beautiful style and inapproachably exquisite diction as the Quran, and should thoroughly and effectively deal with all the complex and difficult moral and spiritual human problems, and should satisfy the multitudinous and multifarious needs of man, and should exert such powerful influence on the lives of its followers, and, above all, should be the repository of all eternal truths and imperishable teachings. The disbelievers are further challenged to produce a book like the Quran with

36. Have they been created for nothing, or are they themselves the creators^a?³⁹⁵⁴

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ
الْخَالِقُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37. Did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no faith.

أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۚ بَلْ
لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38. Do they own the treasures of thy Lord^b, or are they the guardians thereof?³⁹⁵⁵

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ هُمُ
الْمُضَيِّطُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39. Have they a ladder by means of which they can *ascend into heaven* and overhear? Then let their listener bring a manifest authority.³⁹⁵⁶

أَمْ لَهُمْ سُلَّمٌ يَسْتَمِعُونَ فِيهِ ۚ فَلْيَأْتِ
مُسْتَمِعُهُمْ بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

^a56:60. ^b38:10.

their combined and concerted effort, calling in "all the men and jinn" to help and assist them. The Quran emphatically asserts that they will not be able to produce such a book because the Quran is God's own revealed Word. See also 2:24; 14:25 and 17:89.

3954. Commentary:

"Do they think," the verse appears to tell disbelievers, "that they have been created without a cause or purpose, or that they are their own creators?" If that is not the case and God is their Creator, and their creation serves a noble and sublime purpose, and the Quran has been revealed to help them to attain that noble object, then why do they not accept it?"

3955. Commentary:

God has been Gracious and

Merciful to men, in that He has sent the Holy Prophet and has revealed the Quran to him that they may understand the object of their life and, by following him, may attain it and establish a true and real connection with God. But they refuse to accept him, thinking him to be too low to be entitled to demand and command their allegiance. The verse answers this objection of disbelievers by telling them that God in His infallible wisdom has chosen the Prophet to be humanity's infallible Guide and Teacher. How can they dare arrogate to themselves the right and role of being the distributors or guardians of the treasures of God's mercy?

3956. Commentary:

In these verses (vv. 30-44) untenability and futility of their position in rejecting the Holy

40. ^aHas He daughters and for you are sons?³⁹⁵⁷

41. ^bDost thou ask a reward from them, so that they are weighed down with a load of debt?³⁹⁵⁸

42. Do they possess *knowledge* of the unseen^c, so that they write it down?

43. Do they intend a plot? But it is those who disbelieve that will be the victims of their plot.^d ³⁹⁵⁹

44. Have they a god other than Allah? Exalted is Allah above

أَمْ لَهُ الْبَنَاتُ وَلَكُمْ الْبَنُونَ ۖ

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُمْ مِنْ مَغْرَمٍ مُثْقَلُونَ ۙ

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ۙ

أَمْ يَرِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ۖ فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هُمُ الْمَكِيدُونَ ۙ

أَمْ لَهُمْ آلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ ۖ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا

^a6:101; 37:154; 43:17; 53:22. ^b23:73; 68:47. ^c68:48. ^d86:16-17.

Prophet has been brought home to disbelievers. The present verse further tells them that if they claim to have access to the secrets of the heavens, then let them produce authority for the allegation that the Holy Prophet is not the appointed Messenger of God.

3957. Commentary:

It is repugnant (says the verse) to God's Unity, that He should be attributed with having even a son, and yet the disbelievers have the hardihood to assign to Him daughters whose birth is considered by them a mark of humiliation and disgrace.

3958. Commentary:

The verse seems to appeal to the good sense of disbelievers and purports to say to them that when, out of a sincere solicitude for their moral and spiritual well-being, the Prophet calls them to the ways of

righteousness and asks for no reward for his labours, then why do they not accept him? On the contrary, they oppose and persecute him.

3959. Important Words:

كيد (a plot) is inf. noun from كَرَّ i.e. he contrived, devised or plotted a thing whether right or wrong. They say كَرَّهَ i.e. he deceived him, beguiled or circumvented him; he taught him how to deceive or cheat; he fought him. كَيْدٌ means, deceit, cunning, stratagem; war (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that disbelievers are hatching plots against Islam but their plots will recoil on their own heads. The word كَيْدٌ meaning war, as it has been used in the Quran about the Battle of Badr, the reference in the verse may be particularly to that battle (8:19). According to some commentators of the Quran, the next three verses also refer to it.

all that which they associate
with Him!³⁹⁶⁰

يُشْرِكُونَ ٤٤

45. ^aAnd if they should see a piece of the sky falling down, they would say, 'just clouds piled up.'³⁹⁶¹

وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ سَاقِطًا
يَقُولُوا سَحَابٌ مَّرْكُومٌ ٤٥

46. ^bSo leave them until they meet that day of theirs, on which they will be overtaken by a thunderbolt,³⁹⁶²

فَذَرْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي فِيهِ
يَصْعَقُونَ ٤٦

47. The day when their plotting will not avail them aught, nor shall they be helped.

يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا
وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ٤٧

48. ^cAnd verily, for those who do wrong there is a punishment

وَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا عَذَابًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ

^a46:25. ^b23:55; 52:46; 70:43. ^c32:22.

3960. Commentary:

In the preceding verse disbelievers were warned that they themselves would fall victims to the plots they were hatching against Islam. In this verse they are told that when the Day of Decision arrives, their false gods would not be able to render them any help, nor would they be able to help themselves, that idolatry would disappear from Arabia and the country would resound with Divine alleluias.

3961. Commentary:

In the two previous verses disbelievers were warned that Divine punishment was about to overtake them. But such is their state of utter heedlessness and false sense of security (says the verse) that they do not benefit by the timely Divine

warning, so that even if they see a piece of the sky actually falling upon them, they would deceive themselves by considering it as a piece of God's mercy in the form of 'piled-up clouds.' The disbelievers go so far as to challenge the Prophet to "cause a portion of the sky to fall upon us if thou art truthful" (26:188).

3962. Commentary:

The words 'that day of theirs' have been taken to refer to the Day of Badr. On that day a well-equipped Quraish army received a crushing defeat at the hands of a small, ill-armed and ill-equipped band of Muslims. The defeat came as a veritable bolt from the blue for the Quraish. The verse may equally refer to the day of the Fall of Mecca when the Quraish were completely

besides that. But most of them know not. **3963**

49. So wait patiently for the judgement of thy Lord; for assuredly thou art before Our eyes;^a and glorify thy Lord with *His* praise when thou risest up from sleep; **3964**

50. ^bAnd for part of the night also do thou glorify Him and at the setting of the stars.

وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا

وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَإِدْبَارَ النُّجُومِ ﴿٥٠﴾

^a5:68. ^b17:80; 50:41; 73:3-5; 76:27.

unnerved at seeing the Muslim army of ten thousand strong at the very gates of the city.

3963. Important Words:

دون (besides) among other things means, before and behind in respect of place or time; at, near, nearby; with or present with; other than, beside or besides (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

If يوم (day) in the preceding verse be taken to refer to the Day of Badr, the expression دون ذلك would signify the Divine punishment that overtook the Meccan disbelievers in the form of the destructive "seven year famine,"

etc. But if يوم refers to the Day of Judgement, the expression would mean the punishments that come upon disbelievers in this life.

3964. Commentary:

'The judgement of thy Lord' may signify the punishment that was soon to overtake disbelievers, and the words 'thou art before Our eyes' mean that the Holy Prophet was under Divine protection and plotting of the enemies could do him no harm. The reference is to the promise of protection given to him in the words: "And Allah will protect thee from men" (5:68).

CHAPTER 53

AN-NAJM

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūrah* takes its title from the very first word of its text. It is a Meccan *Sūrah*, having been revealed, according to overwhelming scholarly opinion, in the 5th year of the Call, shortly after the first migration to Abyssinia which took place in the month of Rajab of that year.

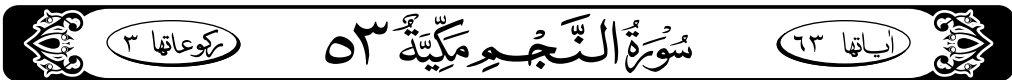
Whereas the preceding *Sūrah* had ended on the injunction contained in the verse: "And for part of the night also do thou glorify Him and at the setting of the stars," the present *Sūrah* opens with the words, "By the star when it falls." Moreover, in the preceding *Sūrah* the truth of the Quranic revelation and of the divine claim of the Holy Prophet was sought to be established by a fleeting reference to Biblical prophecies and natural phenomena. In the *Sūrah* under comment the same subject has been dealt with in a very exquisite and forceful style. It is stated that the Holy Prophet was not only a true Messenger of God but Prophet par excellence, and that he was commissioned by God as humanity's last and infallible guide and preceptor.

Summary of the Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with citing the falling of النجم (for an explanation of this word see under v. 2) as an evidence in support of the divine claim of the Holy Prophet, and proceeds to say: "Your companion has neither erred, nor has he gone astray," because, "The Lord of mighty powers has taught him, the One Possessor of strength." The Prophet, having been initiated into divine mysteries, and having drunk deep at the fountain of Divine grace and knowledge, and of the realization of God, attained to the highest peak of spiritual eminence to which a human being can conceivably rise. Then he became filled to the fullest extent with the milk of human kindness and sympathy, and, having been thus spiritually equipped, was appointed to preach Divine Unity to a world given to the worship of gods made of wood and stone and creations of man's own imagination. The *Sūrah* continues to give very strong, solid and sound arguments from human reason and history, and from the insignificant beginnings of man, in support of the doctrine of the Oneness of God; and condemns idolatry in forceful terms. This foolish doctrine, the *Sūrah* declares, is born of lack of true knowledge and rests on baseless conjecture which "avails naught against truth." Next, it says that idolaters should have learned from the life stories of Abraham, Moses and other Prophets that idolatrous beliefs and practices have always landed mankind into moral and spiritual ruin, and that every man will have to bear

his own cross and render account of his actions to God Who is the final goal of all, and Who gives life and causes death, and brings man to life after he is dead and reduced to particles of earth.

The *Sūrah* closes on a note of warning to disbelievers that if they persisted in rejection of the Divine Message, they would meet with a sad fate as did the people of Noah and ‘Ād and Thamūd and that destruction of falsehood was inevitable and nothing could avert or avoid it.



(AN-NAJM)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.³⁹⁶⁵

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the star when it falls,³⁹⁶⁶

وَالنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ ①

^aSee 1:1.

3965. Commentary:

See 1:1.

3966. Important Words:

النجم (the star). The word has been variously interpreted. Generally it means, star or stemless plant, but when used as a proper noun it signifies "the Pleiades." It is taken by some scholars to signify the gradual revelation of the Quran in pieces, and by some other authorities to refer to the Holy Prophet himself. Its plural النجوم also means, chiefs of a people, or small states or principalities (Lane, Aqrab, Kashshāf, Tāj & Gharā'ibul-Quran).

هوى (falls). They say هوى الشيء i.e. the thing fell from a high to a low place; it rose and ascended. It is said that (al-hawiyyu) is used for going up and الهوى (al-huwiyyu) for coming down (Aqrab).

Commentary:

In view of different meanings of the word النجم given under Important Words, the verse may refer (1) to a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet to the effect that when spiritual darkness will spread over the entire face of the earth and there will

remain nothing of Islam but its name and of the Quran but its letters and faith will go up to heavens, a man of the Persian descent, will bring it back to earth (Tirmidhī & Bukhārī). Or (2) it may signify that the Quranic revelation hears witness to its own truth. Or (3) it may mean that the tender plant of Islam, which now seems to be going down before the strong and adverse winds of opposition that are fiercely blowing against it, would very shortly rise and develop into a mighty tree under whose cool shade great nations would take shelter. Or (4) the verse may mean that as the Arabs are used to determine the course and direction of, and are guided in, their travels by the movements of the stars in the sandy waste of Arabia (16:17), so they would now be led to the goal and end of their spiritual journey by the star par excellence, i.e. the Holy Prophet. (5) The verse may also embody a prophecy about the fall of the ramshackle State of Arabia, a prophecy much more explicitly stated in the verse, "The Hour has drawn nigh and the moon is rent asunder" (54:2).

3. Your companion has neither erred, nor has he gone astray,
3967

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ ۚ

4. Nor does he speak out of *his* own desire.³⁹⁶⁸

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۚ

5. It is nothing but pure revelation revealed by God.³⁹⁶⁹

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ۚ

6. *The Lord* of mighty powers has taught him,³⁹⁷⁰

عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ ۖ

7. *The One* Possessor of strength. So He manifested His ascendance *over everything*,³⁹⁷¹

ذُو مِرَّةٍ ۖ فَاسْتَوَىٰ ۖ

3967. Commentary:

The verse signifies that the ideals and principles presented by the Holy Prophet are not wrong (ما ضل), nor has the Prophet in the least deviated from those principles (ما غوى). Thus, both as regards his great ideals, and the way he lives up to them, he is a sure and safe guide. The argument is reinforced in the next few verses.

The words "your companion" seem to imply a subtle rebuke to the Meccan disbelievers, telling them in effect that the Holy Prophet has lived among them a whole lifetime and they had always looked upon him as a paragon of honesty, integrity and truthfulness but now they dare impute to him such a heinous sin as forging lies against God (10:17). How inconsistent is their attitude?

3968. Commentary:

See next verse.

3969. Commentary:

Whereas the present verse speaks of

the Divine Source of the Holy Prophet's revelation, the two preceding verses allude to the hallucinations of a deranged mind and to the ideas that proceed from one's own desires and the promptings of the Evil One.

The word هو in the verse relates to the Quran.

3970. Important Words:

قوة (powers) is the plural of قوى which is inf. noun from قوى i.e. he became strong; vigorous, robust or sturdy. قوة means, strength, power, potency, might or force (cont. of ضعف) in body and also in intellect (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse signifies that the Quran is a mighty and powerful Revelation before which all former revealed Scriptures pale into insignificance.

3971. Important Words:

مرة (strength) is derived from مر i.e. he went or went away. أمر الحبل means, he twisted the rope tightly. استمر مريرة

8. And *He revealed His Word*
when he was on the uppermost
horizon,^a 3972

وَهُوَ بِالْأَفْقِ الْأَعْلَى ط

9. Then he drew nearer *to God*;
then he came down *to mankind*,
3973

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى ٩

^a81:24.

means, his resolution or determination became firm or strong. استمر بالشئ means, he became strong enough to bear the thing. مرة means, strength; strength of make; strength of intellect; sound judgement and firmness. They say هو رجل ذمرة i.e. he is a strong man or he is possessed of strong intellect and sound judgement and firmness (Lane & Aqrab).

استوى (gained ascendancy over everything) is derived from سوى. They say استوى i.e. the affair of the man became right or straight. استوى means, he became full-grown and mature in body and intellect or he attained the completion of his make and intellect. استوى على ظهر دابة means, he was or became firm or became firmly seated or settled himself on the back of his beast. استوى على الشئ also means, he gained or had the mastery or complete ascendancy over the thing. استوى الطعام means, the food became thoroughly cooked (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2:30 & 19:11.

Commentary:

The expression ذمرة, besides the meaning given under Important Words above, signifies: One Whose power perpetually manifest themselves. The word استوى besides the meaning given in the text may also

apply to the Holy Prophet, signifying that the Prophet's physical and intellectual powers have attained their fullest vigour and maturity. For a collective note on this and the next two verses see v. 10.

3972. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the Holy Prophet had attained to the highest point in his spiritual ascension when God revealed Himself to him in full glory and majesty. Or "the Prophet's being on the uppermost horizon" may signify that the light of Islam was set on a very high place from where it could illumine the whole world.

The word هو may also refer to God. See also verse 10.

3973. Important Words:

دلى (came down) is derived from دلا. They say دلا الدلو i.e. he sent down the bucket in the well; he pulled up or out the bucket from the well. دلى رجله من السرير (dallā) means, he let down his legs from the couch. دلى الشئ means, he made or brought or drew the thing near to another thing. تدلى means, it was let down, he or it lowered or came down; he was or became lowly, humble or submissive; he drew near or approached or increased in nearness. (Lane, Aqrab & Lisān).

10. So that he became, *as it were*, one chord to two bows or closer still.³⁹⁷⁴

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ

Commentary:

The verse means that the Holy Prophet attained the utmost nearness to God. See next verse.

3974. Important Words:

قَاب (chord) substantive noun from قَاب (*qāba*) which means, he was or became near or he approached. قَاب means, the portion of a bow that is between the part that is grasped by the hand and the curved extremity; or from one extremity of the bow to the other; measure or space. The Arabs say بينهما قَاب قَوْسَيْنِ i.e. between them two is the measure of a bow, which means that there is a very close relationship between them. The Arabic proverb رمونا عن قوس واحد i.e. they shot at us from one bow, means, they were unanimous against us. The word thus denotes complete agreement (Lane, Lisān & Zamakhsharī).

Commentary:

Whatever may be the significance of the word قَاب, the expression قَاب قَوْسَيْنِ indicates very close union between two persons. In this sense of the expression the verse purports to say that the Holy Prophet continued to scale the heights of spiritual ascension and to approach near God till all distance between them disappeared and the Prophet became, as it were, "one chord to two bows." The verse reminds of an ancient Arab custom according to which when two persons pledged themselves to firm friendship they would join their bows

in such a way that they appeared as one and then they would shoot an arrow from that combined bow; thus indicating that they had become, as it were, one person, and that an attack on one was an attack on the other. If the word تدلى be taken to apply to God, the verse would mean that the Holy Prophet went up to God and God came down to him till they both became, as it were, united into one person.

The expression كَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ possesses yet another very beautiful and subtle significance, viz. that while on the one hand the Holy Prophet became so completely merged in his Lord and Creator that he became, as it were, His image (پیکر اوشد سراسر صورت رب رحیم), on the other he came down to mankind and became so full of love, sympathy and solicitude that Divinity and humanity became united in him, and in the Quranic words he became the central point of the chord of the two bows of Divinity and humanity.

The words أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ signify that the relationship between the Holy Prophet and God became closer and more intimate than could be conceived.

Verses 8-18 describe the Spiritual Ascension (معراج) of the Holy Prophet, when he was spiritually transported to heavens and was vouchsafed the view of a spiritual manifestation of God, and ascended spiritually very close to his Maker. The *Mi'rāj* was, in fact, a double

11. Then He revealed to His servant that which He revealed.

3975

12. The heart of the Prophet was not untrue to that which he saw.

13. Will you then dispute with him about what he saw?³⁹⁷⁶

14. And certainly, he saw Him a second time *also*,³⁹⁷⁷

15. Near the farthest Lote-tree,
3978

فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ مَا أَوْحَىٰ ۖ

مَا كَذَبَ الْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰ ۖ

أَفْتُمِرُّونَهُ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ ۖ

وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ۖ

عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ۖ

spiritual experience, comprising the spiritual ascent of the Holy Prophet, and the descent towards him of God's manifestation. The *Mi'rāj* (Spiritual Ascension) has become confused in popular mind with *Isrā'* اسرا (or Spiritual Night Journey of the Prophet to Jerusalem), from which it is quite distinct and separate. The *Isrā'* took place in the eleventh or twelfth year of the Call (Zurqānī) while the Holy Prophet had the experience of the *Mi'rāj* or Spiritual Ascension to heavens in its 5th year, shortly after the first migration to Abyssinia, six or seven years earlier. A careful and minute study of the details of these two incidents mentioned in the Ḥadīth also supports this view. For a detailed exposition of the two incidents,—the *Mi'rāj* and the *Isrā'*,—being separate and distinct from each other, see 17:2.

3975. Important Words:

ما (what) is sometimes used, to denote honour, surprise, or for emphasis. ما أحسن زيداً means, how

beautiful Zaid is. فنى ما فلان means, an excellent youth is such a one (Lane & Aqrab).

3976. Commentary:

The verse implies that what the Holy Prophet had seen was his real personal experience; it was veritable truth and no figment of his imagination.

3977. Commentary:

The verse means that the Holy Prophet's vision was a double spiritual experience.

3978. Important Words:

سدرّة (Lote-tree) is derived from سدر which means, he was or became confounded, perplexed or dumb-founded. سدر (sadirā) means, bewildered, perplexed, confounded. سدر (sadirun) means, the sea (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In view of the root meaning of the word the verse may signify that in his Spiritual Ascension (معراج), the Holy

16. Near which is the Garden of Eternal Abode.

عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَىٰ ۖ ﴿١٦﴾

17. *This was* when that which covers covered the Lote-tree.

إِذْ يَغْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ۚ ﴿١٧﴾

3979

18. The eye deviated not, nor did it wander. **3980**

مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ۚ ﴿١٨﴾

19. Surely, he saw the greatest of the Signs of his Lord.

لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَىٰ ۚ ﴿١٩﴾

20. Now tell *me* about Lāt and ‘Uzzā,

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ ۚ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. And Manāt, the third one, another *goddess*! **3981**

وَمَنْوَةَ الثَّالِثَةِ الْآخَرَىٰ ۚ ﴿٢١﴾

Prophet had reached a high stage of nearness to God which was beyond human mind to conceive; or it may signify that at that stage a sea of endless vistas of divine knowledge and eternal realities and verities opened out before him.

Or the verse may possess a symbolic allusion to the fact that divine knowledge vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet would, like the Lote-tree, give comfort and shelter to the tired and jaded limbs of the spiritual wayfarer. Or it may possess a prophetic reference to the tree under which the Companions of the Holy Prophet took the oath of fealty at his hands at the time of the Truce of Hudaibiyyah. Moreover, as the leaves of the Lote-tree possess the quality of safeguarding a dead body from corruption, the verse may signify that the Teaching revealed to the Holy Prophet not only is itself immune against corruption but is eminently fitted to save and preserve mankind

from moral corruption.

3979. Commentary:

The words "that which covers," signify the manifestation of God.

3980. Commentary:

The verse sheds a flood of light on the bedrock of certainty and invincible faith on which the Holy Prophet stood.

3981. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse imply a subtle rebuke to the disbelievers. After having declared the Glory, Majesty and Dignity of God in the former verses, these two verses seem to say to them that, instead of adoring such a Mighty and Powerful Creator and Lord, they stoop so low as to worship gods made of wood and stone.

It may be noted here that some prejudiced Christian critics of the Holy Prophet have woven quite a fantastic and foolish story of his having fallen a victim to the machinations of the Satan.

It is stated that one day at Mecca, when the Holy Prophet recited this *Sūrah* and as in his recitation he came upon these verses, before a mixed assembly of Muslims and disbelievers, Satan contrived to put in his mouth the words: تلك الغرائيق العلى و ان شفا عتهن لترتجى i.e. these are exalted goddesses and their intercession is hoped for (Zurqānī). The critics call it the "lapse of Muḥammad" or his "compromise with idolatry" and seem to rely upon Wāqidī—that inveterate liar and fabricator of reports—or on Ṭabarī, who is generally regarded as a credulous and indiscriminate narrator of events, for this entirely baseless story. These gentlemen have the audacity to attribute this blasphemous utterance to that great iconoclast (the Holy Prophet) whose whole life was spent in denouncing and condemning idolatry and who carried out his noble mission with unremitting vigour and fearless devotion, spurning all offers of compromise with idol worship, and whom blandishments, bribes, cajolery or intimidation failed to move an inch from his set purpose, and to whose unshakable firmness against idolatry the Almighty Himself has borne testimony in the words: ودوا لو تدهن فيدهنون i.e. it is their intense desire that thou shouldst show some pliancy so that they may also be pliant (68:10).

Moreover, the whole context gives the direct lie to this baseless assertion. Not only do the verses that follow but the whole *Sūrah* contains an unsparing condemnation of idolatry and an uncompromising insistence on Divine Unity. It is strange that this patent fact should

have escaped the notice of the Holy Prophet's critics and carpers.

Historical data, too, lend no support whatever to this so-called "lapse." The story has been rejected as completely unreliable by all the learned commentators of the Quran, Ibn Kathīr and Rāḍī among them. The renowned leaders of Muslim religious thought, well versed in the science of Ḥadīth, such as 'Ainī, Qādī 'Ayyāḍ and Nawawī, have regarded it as pure invention. No trace of this story is to be found in الصحاح الستة (the Six Reliable Collections of Hadith). Imam Bukhārī, whose collection, the Saḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, is regarded by Muslim scholars as the most reliable book next to the Quran and who himself was a contemporary of Wāqidī to whom goes the unenviable credit of forging and reporting this story, makes no mention of it, nor does the great historian, Ibn Ishāq, who was born more than 40 years before him. It may be, as stated by Qaṣṭalānī and Zurqānī and supported by some other eminent scholars, that when the Holy Prophet, during the recital of the present *Sūrah* before a mixed assembly of Muslims and disbelievers, came to these verses, some evil-minded person from among the disbelievers might have loudly interjected the words تلك الغرائيق العلى الخ, as was the disbelievers' wont to create confusion by resorting to such low tactics, when the Quran was being recited (41:27).

It is also on record that in the "Days of Ignorance," the Quraish, when making a circuit of the Ka'bah, used to recite the sentence: تلك الغرائيق العلى و ان

22. 'What! for you the males and for Him the females!'^a 3982

23. That indeed is an unfair division. 3983

24. 'These are but names which you have named^b—you and your fathers—for which Allah has sent down no authority.' They follow naught but conjecture and what *their* souls desire, while there has *already* come to them guidance from their Lord. 3984

الْكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْإُنْثَى ۝١٣

تِلْكَ إِذَا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَى ۝١٤

إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمِيَتْهُمَا أَنْتُمْ
وَأَبَاؤُكُمْ مَّا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهِمَا مِنْ
سُلْطَانٍ ۖ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا
تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنْ
رَبِّهِمُ الْهُدَى ۝١٥

^a6:101; 16:58; 37:154; 43:17; 52:40. ^b7:72; 12:41; 22:72.

شفاعتهم لترجي (Mu'jamul-Buldān, vol. 5, under 'Uzzā).

Besides, it is not possible for the Satan to interfere with the purity of the Quranic text. God has taken it upon Himself to protect and safeguard the Quran against all interference and interpolation (15:10 & 72:27-29). So the whole story as invented by Wāqidī and taken undue advantage of by Muir and others of his class is a pure myth and possesses no basis in fact.

It is further stated that the 53rd verse of *Sūrah* Al-Ḥajj was revealed in connection with this incident. The fact that the *Sūrah* under comment was revealed in the 5th year of the Call and *Sūrah* Al-Ḥajj in the 13th or 12th year, takes the bottom completely from under this baseless assertion.

3982. Commentary:

The verse administers a further rebuke to the Meccan pagans, purporting to say to them that apart

from their blasphemous practice of associating gods, made of wood and stone, with God the Almighty, the Creator of heavens and earth and the Lord of Glory, Majesty and Dignity, they have the hardihood to assign to Him daughters whose birth they regard as a source of disgrace and humiliation in their own case.

3983. Important Words:

ضَارَ (unjust) is derived from ضَارَ which means, he deviated from the right course; he acted unjustly, wrongfully, tyrannically. ضَارَ فِي الْحُكْمِ means, he gave an unjust judgement. ضَارَ حَقَّهُ means, he deprived him or defrauded him of a part or the whole of his right or due (Lane & Aqrab).

3984. Commentary:

Whereas a true believer stands on the bedrock of certainty and sure knowledge (12:109), an idolater possesses no rational argument and no revealed authority for his false

25. Can man have whatever he desires? **3985**

أَمْ لِلْإِنْسَانِ مَا تَمْتَلِكُ ۝٢٥

26. Nay, to Allah belong the Hereafter and this *world*.

عِ

فَلِلَّهِ الْآخِرَةُ وَالْأُولَىٰ ۝٢٦

R. 2.

27. And how many an angel is there in the heavens, but their intercession shall be of no avail, except after Allah has given permission to whomsoever He wills and pleases.^a **3986**

وَكَمْ مِنْ مَلَكٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ لَا تُغْنِي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ يَأْذَنَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَرْضَىٰ ۝٢٧

28. Those who believe not in the Hereafter name the angels with names of females;^b

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ لَيَسْمُؤْنَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةَ الْأُنثَىٰ ۝٢٨

29. But they have no knowledge thereof. They follow nothing but conjecture; and conjecture avails naught against truth.^c

وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ ۖ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا ۝٢٩

30. So turn aside from him who turns away from Our remembrance, and seeks nothing but the life of this world.

فَاعْرِضْ عَنْ مَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ۝٣٠

^a2:256; 20:110; 34:24. ^b4:118; 37:150-151; 43:20. ^c6:117; 10:37.

beliefs or doctrines. He falls a helpless victim to conjecture and superstition and is a slave to his own desires and fancies. The verse, as also v. 29, speaks of the utter untenability of an idolater's position. He stands on a broken reed.

3985. Commentary:

The verse means that idolaters hope that their gods will intercede for them

with Allah. They are entertaining a false hope which will never be fulfilled.

3986. Important Words:

For a detailed note on شفاعة (intercession) see 2:49 and 19:88.

The words لمن يشاء و يرضى may also mean, regarding one who conforms to His will and with whom He is pleased.

31. That is the utmost limit of their knowledge. Verily, thy Lord knows best him who strays from His way, and He knows him best who follows guidance.^a **3987**

ذَلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ اهْتَدَى ﴿٣١﴾

32. And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, that He may requite those who do evil for what they have wrought, and reward those who do good with what is best.^b

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَ
الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا بِالْحُسْنَى ﴿٣٢﴾

33. Those who shun the grave sins and immoral actions except minor faults^c—verily, thy Lord is Master of vast forgiveness.^d He knows you full well *from the time* when He created you from the earth, and when you were embryos in the bellies of your mothers. So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows him best who is *truly* righteous. **3988**

الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبِيرَ الْأَثْمِ
وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ
أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَإِذْ أَنْتُمْ أَجْنَّةٌ
فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ فَلَا تُزَكُّوا
أَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى ﴿٣٣﴾

^a16:126; 28:57; 68:8. ^b4:124-125; 6:161; 41:47. ^c4:32; 42:38. ^d13:7; 41:44.

3987. Commentary:

The words of the verse seem to have been spoken ironically or by way of reproach. The utmost limit of the knowledge of disbelievers (the verse purports to say) is that they worship gods, which can do them no good nor can they injure them, in preference to God the Almighty, to Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and the

earth and Who has created all things for the service of man. Moreover their strivings are confined to the acquirement of material things of this life and they have no thought for the Hereafter.

3988. Important Words:

اللمم (minor faults) is derived from لم. They say ألم بالقوم او على المقوم i.e. he came to the people and alighted at their

R. 3.

34. Seest thou him who turns away,

35. And gives a little, and does it grudgingly? 3989

36. Has he the knowledge of the unseen so that he can see *his own end*?

37. Has he not been informed of what is in the Scriptures of Moses

38. And *of* Abraham who fulfilled *the commandments*?—
3990

أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي تَوَلَّى ۝٣٤

وَأَعْطَى قَلِيلًا وَأَكْدَى ۝٣٥

أَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ فَهُوَ يَرَى ۝٣٦

أَمْ لَمْ يُنَبِّأْ بِمَا فِي صُحُفِ مُوسَى ۝٣٧

وَأَبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّى ۝٣٨

abode temporarily as a guest. أَلَمْتُ بِكَذَا means, I appreciated it without committing it. أَلَم also means, he visited covertly or in a light, slight or hasty manner or rarely. لَمْ means, a chance leaning towards evil; a temporary and light lapse; a rare slight offence, a passing evil idea which flashes across the mind and leaves no impression on it. The root word possesses the sense of temporariness, haste and infrequency and of doing a thing unintentionally. A chance, unintentional look at a woman has also been called اللَّمَم by some authorities (Lane & Aqrab).

3989. Important Words:

أَكْدَى (gives grudgingly) is derived from كَدَى. They say أَكْدَى الرَّجُلُ i.e. the man gave niggardly or grudgingly; he did not succeed in getting what he wanted. أَكْدَاهُ عَنْ كَذَا means, he prevented him from such a thing. أَكْدَى الْمَعْدِن means, the mine refused to bring out diamonds and jewels. أَكْدَى الْخَافِر means,

the digger in the course of digging came across a hard or stony piece of ground or clod and could dig no further. سَأَلَهُ فَأَكْدَى means he begged of him but found him like a hard piece of ground and he did not give. أَكْدَى الْمَطَر means, the rain decreased. (Aqrab).

3990. Commentary:

Patriarch Abraham, the progenitor of the three great religious peoples—Jews, Christians and Muslims—fulfilled faithfully the covenant he had made with God. He carried out literally all Divine commandments. He was made to pass through severe trials and tribulations and successfully came out of those ordeals. Says the Quran: *And remember when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands, which he fulfilled* (2:125). Abraham was commanded by God to leave his only son Ishmael, (the hope and prop of his old age), when a mere child, with his elderly mother, in the arid

39. That no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another;^a **3991**

أَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۖ

40. And that man will have nothing but what he strives for; **3992**

وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ۚ

41. And that his striving shall soon be seen; **3993**

وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ ۚ

42. Then will he be rewarded for it with the fullest reward;

ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاءُ الْأَوْفَىٰ ۚ

43. And that to thy Lord do all *things* ultimately go; **3994**

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنتَهَىٰ ۚ

44. And that it is He Who makes *men* laugh and makes *them* weep;

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَضْحَكَ وَأَبْكَى ۚ

^a6:165; 35:19; 39:8.

and barren waste, near Mecca, and then, the child having grown up to be a young boy, he was commanded to slaughter him, which command Abraham prepared to carry out, without the least hesitancy. It were actions like these that earned for him the divine title of the Faithful, which is the significance of the word *دُفِيَ*.

3991. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that every man shall have to carry his own cross and bear his own burden. See also 17:14-16.

3992. Commentary:

It is after unremitting, incessant and persistent striving, accompanied by noble ideals and sublime principles, that one can achieve the object of one's quest.

3993. Commentary:

The kind of striving mentioned in the preceding verse never fails to produce the desired results.

3994. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the whole system of cause and effect ends with God. He is the Cause of all causes or the First Cause. A natural order of cause and effect pervades the whole universe. Every cause, which is not itself primary, is traceable to some other cause and this to another and so on. But as the series of cause and effect in our finite world cannot be indefinite it must terminate at some point. The Final Cause is, therefore, the Author of the universe, it is to this Final Cause that the present verse calls attention.

45. And that it is He Who causes death and gives life;^a

46. And that He creates the pairs, male and female,^b

47. ^cFrom a sperm drop when it is poured forth;

48. And that it is for Him to bring forth the second creation;

49. And that it is He Who enriches and grants wealth to *one's* satisfaction;³⁹⁹⁵

50. And that He is the Lord of Sirius;³⁹⁹⁶

51. And that He destroyed the first *tribe of* 'Ād,³⁹⁹⁷

52. And *the tribe of* Thamūd, and He spared not *any of them*,³⁹⁹⁸

53. And *He destroyed* the people of Noah before *them*—verily, they were most unjust and most rebellious—

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَمَاتَ وَأَحْيَا ۝٤٥

وَأَنَّهُ خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ ۝٤٦

مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ إِذَا تُمْنَىٰ ۝٤٧

وَأَن عَلَيْهِ النَّشَأُ الْأُخْرَىٰ ۝٤٨

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَغْنَىٰ وَأَقْنَىٰ ۝٤٩

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ رَبُّ الشَّعْرَىٰ ۝٥٠

وَأَنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ عَادًا الْأُولَىٰ ۝٥١

وَتَمُودًا فَمَا أَبْقَىٰ ۝٥٢

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِّنْ قَبْلُ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا

هُم أَظْلَمَ وَأَطْغَىٰ ۝٥٣

^a2:29; 30:41. ^b4:2; 7:190; 30:22. ^c56:59-60; 75:38.

3995. Important Words:

أَقْنَى (grants wealth to one's satisfaction) is the transitive form of قَنَى. They say قَنَى الْمَالَ i.e. he took for himself property for permanent use and not for possession. أَقْنَاهُ اللَّهُ means, God gave him wealth and pleased him, i.e. it made him contented and satisfied (Lane & Aqrab).

3996. Commentary:

The Arabs worshipped the mighty star, Sirius, because they regarded it

as a source of good or bad luck for them.

3997. Commentary:

After putting forward argument in support of Divine Unity from human reason and the insignificant beginning of man, the *Sūrah*, from this verse introduces history to prove the same thesis.

3998. Commentary:

The tribe of Thamūd is known as the second 'Ād.

54. And He overthrew the subverted cities of the people of Lot,

وَالْمُوتَفِكَ أَهْوَى ۝٥٤

55. So that there covered them that which covered.³⁹⁹⁹

فَغَشَّاهَا مَا غَشَّى ۝٥٥

56. Which then, O believer, of the bounties of thy Lord wilt thou dispute?⁴⁰⁰⁰

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكَ تَتَمَارَى ۝٥٦

57. This is a Warner from among the class of the Warners of old.

هَذَا نَذِيرٌ مِّنَ النَّذِرِ الْأُولَى ۝٥٧

58. The Hour that was to come has drawn nigh,⁴⁰⁰¹

أَزِفَتِ الْأَزْفَةُ ۝٥٨

59. None but Allah can avert it.

لَيْسَ لَهُا مَن دُونِ اللَّهِ كَاشِفَةٌ ۝٥٩

60. Do you then wonder at this announcement?⁴⁰⁰²

أَفَمِنْ هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ تَعْجَبُونَ ۝٦٠

3999. Commentary:

The particle **مَا** has been used here to denote respect or dignity, meaning that an overwhelming punishment enveloped them.

4000. Important Words:

After seeing so many and so clear and invincible arguments and signs that support and substantiate the claims of the Holy Prophet, the verse says to the obstinate disbelievers, in words full of pathos, mixed with irony, how long will they continue to deny truth and wander in the wilderness of disbelief?

4001. Important Words:

الْأَزْفَةُ (The Hour) is fem. act. part. from **أَزَتْ** which means, he was or became or drew near; he hastened or

was quick. **الْأَزْفَةُ** means, the Hour of Judgement; the Resurrection; the near event; death (Lane).

Commentary:

The idolaters of Mecca, says the verse, have persisted in denying the Divine Message and as a result of their denial the hour of the overthrow of their power has drawn very near; nay it is knocking at their very door.

4002. Commentary:

This *Sūrah* was revealed very early in the Holy Prophet's ministry, i.e. in the fifth year of the Call, when in the midst of mockery, threats and persecution, the fate of Islam was hanging in the balance. It was at that time that the prophecy was made about the overthrow of the Quraishite

61. And do you laugh, and weep
not? **4003**

وَتَضْحَكُونَ وَلَا تَبْكُونَ ﴿١١﴾

62. And will you remain
proudly heedless?

وَأَنْتُمْ سَمِدُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

63. So prostrate yourselves
before Allah, and worship
Him.^a **4004**

سَجَّدُوا
لِلَّهِ
وَعَبَدُوا

فَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ وَاعْبُدُوا ﴿١٣﴾

^a7:206; 22:78; 41:38; 96:20.

power in this *Sūrah*, and in much more forceful accents in the next (54:46).

4003. Important Words:

سَامِدُونَ (proudly heedless) is the plural of سَامِد which is act. part. from سَمَد which means, he was or became high and elevated; he raised his head in pride; he diverted himself, sported and played; he was or became negligent or heedless and went away leaving a thing; he was or became confounded, perplexed, amazed, and was unable to see the right course; he kept constantly to an affair (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The warning contained in vv. 58-61 is repeated here.

4004. Commentary:

The verse seems to say to disbelievers, there is yet time that they should accept the Divine Message and worship God and repent

so that mercy might be shown to them.

It seems that as the Holy Prophet finished reciting the *Sūrah*, before a mixed gathering of Muslims and disbelievers, and, along with his followers, he prostrated himself on the ground, the disbelievers too, having been deeply impressed with the solemnity of the occasion and being overawed by the august recitation of the Quranic words, as well as by God's Majesty and Glory, might also have fallen in prostration. This was not unlikely since they regarded God as the Supreme Lord and Creator and their own deities as mere intercessors with Him (10:19). By connecting this plausible incident, however, with the baseless legend woven round vv. 21-23 by some "inventive minds," the traducers of the Holy Prophet have persuaded themselves to detect in it a "lapse" on his part. But the lapse, if any, is the creation of their own imagination.

CHAPTER 54

AL-QAMAR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

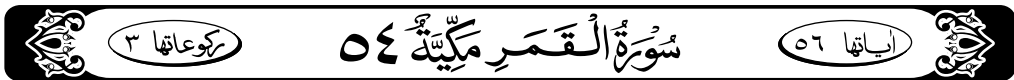
Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūrah* takes its title from its opening verse. It definitely is an early Meccan *Sūrah*, having been revealed about the same time as the preceding *Sūrah*. An-Najm, which was revealed in the 5th year of the Call. The *Sūrah* so closely resembles *Sūrah* An-Najm in style and contents that it seems to supplement the latter's subject matter. Whereas *Sūrah* An-Najm had ended on a note of warning to disbelievers in the words: أَزِفَتِ الْآزِفَةُ i.e. the Hour of their doom has drawn near, the present *Sūrah* opens with the expression اقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ meaning, that the threatened Hour has almost arrived; it is at their very door.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* is the fifth of the group of seven *Sūrahs* which begin with *Sūrah* Qāf and end with Al-Wāqī'ah. All these *Sūrahs* were revealed very early in the Holy Prophet's ministry and deal with the basic doctrines of Islam—Existence and Unity of God, the Resurrection and Revelation. The *Sūrahs* adduce laws of nature, human reason, common sense and histories of the past Prophets as arguments to prove these theses. In some of these *Sūrahs* special emphasis has been laid on one kind of arguments with a fleeting reference to other kinds and vice versa. In the present *Sūrah*, however, the Holy Prophet's divine claim and the Resurrection have been dealt with, with special reference to the histories of the past Prophets, particularly to those of Noah, the tribes of 'Ād and Thamūd and Lot's people.

Towards its end the *Sūrah* makes pointed reference to the fulfilment of the prophecy about the destruction and overthrow of the power of pagan Arabs about which a warning had been given in the preceding *Sūrah* (53:58).



(AL-QAMAR)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.⁴⁰⁰⁵

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. The Hour has drawn nigh^b, and the moon is rent asunder.⁴⁰⁰⁶

إِقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ ②

^aSee 1:1. ^b21:2.

4005. Commentary:

See 1:1.

4006. Important Words:

انشق (is rent asunder) is derived from شق. They say شق الشيء i.e. he split, clave, tore or rent the thing. شق العصا means, he broke the staff, i.e. he separated himself from the community. An Arab would say, شق عصا المسلمين i.e. he created disunion and dissension among the Muslims. انشق القمر means, the moon was or became rent asunder; or according to some, the affair became manifest (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

القمر (the moon). قمر الشيء means, the light of the thing became intense. أقمر means, the night became bright with the light of the moon. القمر means, the moon in its third night and after; the moon absolutely. أقمار العلم و شموسه means, the ulema or learned men of the people. القمران means, the sun and the moon (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Whether or not "splitting of the moon" into two parts, observable by the naked eye, contravened any physical law of nature, it cannot be denied that the event lacks historical evidence which could at all be

described as unimpeachable. At the same time no one can presume to have fathomed all divine mysteries or fully comprehended or encompassed all the secrets of nature. It is not possible to imagine that such an event, affecting a considerable area of the globe, should have remained unnoticed in the observatories of the world or that it should have remained unrecorded in books of history. But the incident having found a mention in such reliable collections of Ḥadīth as Bukhārī and Muslim and having been narrated successively in traditions of reliable authority and reported by such learned Companions of the Holy Prophet as Ibn Mas'ūd and Ibn 'Abbās, does show that some natural phenomenon of unusual importance must have taken place in the time of the Holy Prophet. Some commentators of the Quran—Rāḍī among them—have sought to solve the difficult problem by declaring the incident to be a lunar eclipse. Imām Ghazālī and Shāh Walī Allāh also hold the view that the moon had not in fact been rent asunder, but that God had so contrived that it appeared to the beholders as such. However,

taking into consideration the forceful language in which it has been mentioned in the Quran, the incident appears to be something more than a mere lunar eclipse. It indeed constituted a great miracle shown by the Prophet at the insistent demand of disbelievers (see Bukhārī & Muslim). It seems to be a vision of the Holy Prophet in which the Companions of the Holy Prophet and some of the Quraish were made to share—just as the rod turning into a serpent was a vision of Moses in which the magicians were made to share. Alternatively, it may be that just as the striking of seawater by Moses with his rod coincided with the ebb of the tide and thus assumed the character of a miracle, because God alone knew when the sea would recede and it was He Who commanded Moses to strike the waters at the time of recession, similarly God may have commanded the Holy Prophet to show the miracle of the cleaving asunder of the moon at a time when a heavenly body was to take such a position in front of the moon that it caused the moon to appear to the beholders as split into two parts.

But the most plausible explanation, which is also possessed of very deep spiritual significance of this, one of the most outstanding miracles shown by the Holy Prophet, lies in the fact that the moon was the national emblem of the Arabs and the symbol of their political power, just as the sun at that time was the national ensign of the Persians. When Ṣafiyyah, the daughter of Ḥuyay bin Akhtab, a leader of the Jews of

Khaibar, mentioned to her father that she had seen in a dream that the moon had fallen into her lap, he slapped her face saying that she wanted to marry the leader of the Arabs. After the fall of Khaibar Ṣafiyyah's dream was fulfilled when she was married to the Holy Prophet (Zurqānī & Usdul-Ghābbah). Similarly, 'Ā'ishah had seen a dream that three moons had fallen in her private apartment which saw its fulfilment when the Holy Prophet, Abū Bakr and 'Umar were buried there one after the other (Mu'aṭṭa', *Kitābul-Janā'iz*). According to this sense of the word قمر, the verse would signify that the hour of destruction of their political power with which the disbelieving Arabs had been threatened in 53:58 has already arrived. The word الساعه (Hour) in that case would refer to the Battle of Badr in which all the chiefs and leaders of the Quraish were killed and the foundations of the complete destruction of their power were laid. Thus the verse constituted a mighty prophecy which met with remarkable fulfilment, nearly eight or nine years after its announcement. Moreover, the Holy Prophet has been called "illuminating moon" (قمرًا منيرًا) in the Quran. In this sense of the word the verse would mean that after the Holy Prophet's separation from the Quraish, the "Hour" of the destruction of their power would arrive, and it happened likewise. About a year after the Migration of the Holy Prophet to Medina, the Battle of Badr was fought which broke the Quraishite power.

3. ^aAnd if they see a Sign, they turn away and say, 'a continuous sorcery.'⁴⁰⁰⁷

وَإِنْ يَرَوْا آيَةً يُعْرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ مُّسْتَمِرٌّ ۝٢

4. They reject *the truth* and follow their own fancies. But every decree *of God* shall certainly come to pass.⁴⁰⁰⁸

وَكَذَّبُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُّسْتَقَرٌّ ۝٣

5. And there has already come to them the great news wherein is a warning—⁴⁰⁰⁹

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْبَاءِ مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ ۝٤

^a21:2.

Taking the expression انشق القمر in the sense, "the affair has become manifest," the verse would mean that the hour of the destruction of the Quraishite power has arrived and that now it would become manifest that the Prophet was a true Divine Messenger.

The word الساعة, besides the Battle of Badr, may apply to the Battle of the Ditch and the Fall of Mecca, as these three events combined to bring about complete and total annihilation of the power of pagan Arabs.

4007. Important Words:

مستمر (continuous) is derived from استمر which means, he or it passed; went away; it (a thing) went on in one uniform course or manner; it continued in the same state; he or it became strong or firm like a rope tightly twisted. استمر بالشئ means, he became strong to bear the thing. مستمر means. (1) passing, fleeting, transient; (2) continuous: (3) strong, firm (Lane & Aqrab).

4008. Commentary:

The verse means that the destruction of the power of the pagan Quraish and the triumph of Islam has been decreed by God and the Divine decree must come to pass.

4009. Important Words:

ازدجر (warning) is derived from مزجر which means, he chid repelled, drove, spurned, checked him. They say ازدجره i.e. he prevented or hindered him from doing so by cry or harsh speech. مزدجر means, prevention, prohibition; threatening; something by which one is prevented, forbidden from doing a certain thing—a warning (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the pagan Arabs must have learnt from the accounts of disbelievers of the Prophets of yore that rejection of Truth does not pay. They should have taken a lesson from their evil end and should have abstained from following in their footsteps.

6. Consummate wisdom; but the
"warnings profit *them* not.⁴⁰¹⁰

حِكْمَةً بِالْغَةِ فَمَا تَعْنِ التُّذْرُ ١

7. Therefore, turn thou away
from them. The day when the
Summoner will summon *them*
to a disagreeable thing.⁴⁰¹¹

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ يَدْعُ الدَّاعِ إِلَىٰ شَيْءٍ نُّكْرٍ ٢

8. ^bWhile their eyes will be cast
down and they will come forth
from *their* graves as though
they were locusts scattered
about, ⁴⁰¹²

خُشَّعًا أَبْصَارُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُنْتَشِرٌ ٣

9. ^cHastening towards the
Summoner. The disbelievers
will say, 'This is a hard day.'⁴⁰¹³

مُهْطِعِينَ إِلَى الدَّاعِ يَقُولُ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا يَوْمٌ عَسِيرٌ ٤

^a10:102. ^b70:45. ^c36:52; 14:44.

4010. Important Words:

أَنْذَرِ (warning) is inf. noun from أُنْذِرُ and means, a warning. It is also the plural of نَذِير i.e. a warner. They say أَنْذَرَهُ بِالْأَمْرِ i.e. he informed him or advised him of the affair; he warned him of it or put him on guard or in fear against it (Aqrab & Lane).

4011. Important Words:

نَكَرَ (disagreeable) is derived from نَكَرَ (nakira) which means, it (a thing or affair) was or became bad, evil, abominable or foul; it was or became disallowed, disagreeable; it was or became difficult, hard, arduous or severe (Lane).

Commentary:

See v. 9.

4012. Commentary:

'Graves' here means the houses of disbelievers. At several places in the

Quran disbelievers have been likened to the dead because of their being completely devoid of spiritual life (27:81; 35:23).

4013. Important Words:

مُهْطِعِينَ (hastening) is the plural of مَهْطَعٌ which is act. part. from أَهْطَعَ which is transitive form of هَطَعَ. They say هَطَعَ الرَّجُلُ i.e. the man came running in fright; or the man advanced with his eyes fixed on something from which he did not raise them. أَهْطَعَ فِي السَّيْرِ means, he hastened and came in haste frightened. أَهْطَعَ الرَّجُلُ also means, the man looked with humility. مَهْطَعٌ means, one who looks at a thing without raising his eyes from it (Aqrab). See also 14:44.

Commentary:

This and the preceding two verses give a graphic picture of the confusion, consternation and bewilderment of the

10. The people of Noah rejected *the truth* before them^a; aye, they rejected Our servant and said, 'A ^bmadman, and one who is spurned.'⁴⁰¹⁴

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا
عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مُجْنُونٌ ۖ وَازْدَجَرَ ۝١٧

11. He prayed to his Lord saying 'I am overcome, so *come* Thou *to my* help ^c!'

فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَاتَّصِرْ ۝١٨

12. Thereupon We opened the gates of heaven with water pouring down;⁴⁰¹⁵

فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَاءٍ مُنْهَمِرٍ ۝١٩

13. ^dAnd We caused the earth to burst forth with springs, so the

وَفَجَّرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَالْتَقَى الْمَاءُ

^a6:35; 22:43; 35:26; 40:6. ^b23:26. ^c23:27; 26:118-119. ^d11:41; 21:78; 26:121; 37:83; 71:26.

Quraish when they saw the Summoner—the Holy Prophet—whom they had driven out of Mecca and upon whose head they had set a price only a few years earlier, at the very gates of the city. The mighty prophecy embodied in these verses was made at a time when the fate of Islam itself was hanging in the balance and, humanly speaking, there was not the remotest possibility of its being fulfilled.

4014. Commentary:

As briefly stated in the Introduction, almost the entire *Sūrah* is devoted to a discussion of the dreadful fate which the Rejecters of former Divine Prophets had met and this fact has been adduced as an argument to prove the truth of the Holy Prophet's claim. The cases of the People of Noah, of the tribes of 'Ād and Thamūd and that of the

people of Lot have received a special and somewhat detailed mention because these peoples lived on the confines of the Ḥijāz and the Quraish were quite familiar with their histories and had commercial relations with them. The people to whom Noah preached his Message lived in Iraq which lies to the north-east of Arabia, and the tribe of 'Ād lived in Yemen and Hadramaut which form the southern part of it while the tribe of Thamūd thrived and flourished in the north-west of Arabia which extends from the Ḥijāz to Palestine and the ill-fated people of Lot lived in Sodom and Gommorah in Palestine.

4015. Important Words:

منهمر (pouring down) is derived from همر الماء. They say همر العين بالمع means, the eyes flowed with tears. اغممر الماء means, the water poured out and flowed (Aqrah).

two waters met for a purpose that was decreed.⁴⁰¹⁶

14. And ^a"We carried him upon that *which was made* of planks and nails.⁴⁰¹⁷

15. It floated on under Our eyes^b; a reward for him who had been rejected.

16. ^cAnd We left it as a Sign for the succeeding generations; but is there anyone who would take heed?⁴⁰¹⁸

17. How *terrible* then was My punishment and My warning!

18. And indeed We have made the Quran easy^d to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?⁴⁰¹⁹

عَلَىٰ أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ ۚ

وَحَمَلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ ذَاتِ أَلْوَاحٍ وَدُسْرٍ ۚ

تَجَرَّيْ بِأَعْيُنِنَا ۖ جَزَاءٌ لِّمَن كَانَ كُفِرَ ۝

وَلَقَدْ تَرَكْنَاهَا آيَةً فَهَلْ مِنْ مُّدَكِّرٍ ۝

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذْرٍ ۝

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ

مُّدَكِّرٍ ۝

^a26:120; 29:16. ^b11:42-43. ^c29:16. ^d19:98; 44:59.

4016. Commentary:

The rainwater pouring down in torrents from the skies and also gushing forth from under the ground, caused a huge flood which engulfed the entire land and thus the Divine decree was fulfilled, destroying the people of Noah.

4017. Important Words:

دسر (nails) is the plural of دسر which is derived from دسر which means, he drove a nail with force; he nailed anything; he fastened or repaired a ship with a nail, or with a cord of fibres of palm-tree. They say دسره i.e. he thrust, drove, pierced or stabbed him vehemently with a spear, he or it

pushed, drove, propelled him or it. دسر means, a cord of fibres of the palm tree with which the planks of a ship are bound together; a nail of a ship (Lane & Aqrab).

4018. Important Words:

مدكر (who would take heed) is act. part. from اذكر (iddakara) which is synonymous with ذكر, تذكر (tadhakkara) and اذكر (idhdhakara) meaning, he remembered or became reminded of; he took heed, reflected or was mindful. مدكر means, one who would take heed, reflect and be mindful (Lane & Aqrab).

4019. Commentary:

All those basic ideals, principles

19. The *tribe of 'Ād* rejected^a the Truth. How terrible then was My punishment and My warning!

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذْرِي^{١٩}

20. ^bWe sent against them a furious wind on a day of unending ill luck.⁴⁰²⁰

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي
يَوْمٍ نَحْسٍ مُّسْتَمِرٍّ^{٢٠}

21. Tearing people away as though they were the trunks of uprooted palm trees^c.⁴⁰²¹

تَنْزِعُ النَّاسَ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ
مُّنْقَعِرٍ^{٢١}

22. How terrible then was My punishment and My warning!

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذْرِي^{٢٢}

23. And indeed We have made the Quran easy to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ
مُّدَّكِرٍ^{٢٣}

^a26:124. ^b41:17; 69:7. ^c69:8.

and rules of conduct which concern man's moral development and his physical and social progress and well-being, have been laid down in the Quran in simple and easy language and are easily comprehensible by persons of average intelligence and understanding and are also quite practical and practicable because they are in harmony with human nature. But the treasures of Divine realization and deep mysteries of the unknown which lie hidden in the Quran are accessible only to those few holy men of God who are endowed with special spiritual insight and who have scaled the dizzy heights of communion with the Divine Being and have been purified by Him.

Moreover, the Quran has been

made easy in this sense also that it comprehends all those permanent and imperishable teachings that are found in other revealed Scriptures, with a great deal more that is indispensable for the guidance of man till the end of time (98:4).

4020. Commentary:

The verse does not mean that any particular time is auspicious or inauspicious or lucky or unlucky. The meaning is that for the tribe of 'Ād the day proved unlucky.

4021. Important Words:

قعر (uprooted) is derived from منقعر. They say قعر الشجرة means, he uprooted the tree. انقعرت الشجرة means, the tree became uprooted. منقعر means, uprooted (Lane & Aqrab).

R. 2.

24. *The tribe of Thamūd also rejected the Warners^a. 4022*

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. And they said, ‘What! a man, from among ourselves a single mortal! Shall we follow him? Then indeed we would be in manifest error, and *would be mad*. 4023

فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرًا مِمَّنَّا وَاحِدًا نَتَّبِعُهُ إِنَّا إِذَا
لَفِئْ صُلِّ وَسُعِرٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. ^bHas the Reminder been revealed to him *alone* of all of us? Nay, he is a boastful liar.’ 4024

ءَأُلْقِيَ الذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ
كَذَّابٌ أَشِرٌّ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. ‘Tomorrow will they know who is the boastful liar.’

سَيَعْلَمُونَ غَدًا مَنِ الْكَذَّابُ الْأَشِرُّ ﴿٢٧﴾

^a69:5. ^b38:9.

4022. Commentary:

As all Prophets are commissioned by God and their revelation proceeds from the same Divine Source and contains analogous eternal basic principles, the rejection of one Prophet amounts to the rejection of all of them. That is why the verse describes the tribe of Thamūd as having rejected all Divine Messengers while, in fact, they had rejected only the Prophet Ṣāliḥ.

4023. Important Words:

سعر (madness) is derived from سعر (sa‘ara). They say سعر الحرب i.e. he provoked the war. سعر الرجل (su‘ira) means, the man was smitten by hot wind; he was or became vehemently hungry or thirsty; he was or became mad. سعر means, madness, insanity,

demoniacal possession; punishment; vehemence of heat, hunger or thirst; fury; pain (Lane & Aqrab).

4024. Important Words:

أشْر (boastful) is act. part. from أَشْر (ashira) which means, he exulted and behaved insolently; he behaved with pride and self-conceitedness. أَشْر means, one who is insolent and behaves with pride and exults (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Conceit, false pride and arrogance are man’s greatest spiritual enemies. They constitute the hard hurdles that bar the way to the acceptance of truth. The Quran has repeatedly mentioned disbelievers as having rejected the Divine Message due to these moral ills. See 25:8; 38:9, 43:32.

28. "We will send the she-camel as a trial for them. So watch them. O *Ṣālih*, and have patience;⁴⁰²⁵

29. 'And tell them that the water is shared *only* between them, *but as for the she-camel* every drinking time may be attended *by her*.'⁴⁰²⁶

30. But they called their comrade, and he seized *a sword* and hamstrung *her*.⁴⁰²⁷

31. How *terrible* then was My punishment and My warning!

32. 'We sent against them a single blast, and they became like the dry stubble, whittled down by a maker of enclosure.'⁴⁰²⁸

إِنَّا مُرْسِلُوا النَّاقَةِ فِتْنَةً لَّهُمْ
فَارْتَبُّهُمْ وَأَصْطَبِرُ^{٢٨}

وَنَبِّئُهُمْ أَنَّ الْمَاءَ قِسْمَةٌ بَيْنَهُمْ كُلُّ
شَرْبٍ مُّخْتَصِرٌ^{٢٩}

فَنَادُوا صَاحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَاطَى فَعَقَرَ^{٣٠}

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذْرِي^{٣١}

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً
فَكَانُوا كَهَشِيمِ الْمُخْتَطِرِ^{٣٢}

^a7:74; 11:65; 17:60; 26:156; 91:14. ^b7:78; 11:66; 26:158; 91:15. ^c7:79; 11:68; 26:159; 41:18.

4025. Important Words:

اصْطَبِرَ means, he was patient or constant; he acquired patience; he was tried with patience. It is the intensive form of صَبَرَ (Lane & Aqrab).

4026. Important Words:

شَرَبَ (drinking) is inf. noun from شَرِبَ (*shariba*) and means, water that one drinks; a draught of water; a share or portion of water that falls to one's lot; the right to use water for watering fields and beasts: a watering place; a turn or time of drinking. شَرِبَ (*shurbun*) means, the act of drinking (Lane & Aqrab).

4027. Important Words:

عَطَا (seized) is derived from عَطَا. عَطَا يَدَهُ means, he raised his hand

towards it. تعاطى الشيء means, he took the thing. تعاطى الامر means, he ventured upon the affair. تعاطى الرجل means, the man stood upon the extremities of the toes and raised his hands to take a thing. عَطَا (inf. noun) signifies, the act of raising the head and hands to take a thing. تَعَاطَى (*ta'āṭin*) is the act of taking a thing with the hand; taking with the hand what is not right or just or due; contending in taking; standing upon the extremities of the toes with raising the hands to a thing; being bold or courageous so as to venture upon a thing without consideration or hesitation (Lane & Aqrab).

4028. Important Words:

المُخْتَطِر (maker of enclosure) is act.

33. And indeed We have made the Quran easy to *understand* and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?

34. "Lot's people also rejected the Warners.

35. ^bWe sent a storm of stones upon them except the family of Lot, whom We delivered by early dawn,

36. As a favour from Us. Thus do We reward him who is grateful.

37. And he indeed had warned them of Our punishment, but they doubted the warning.

38. ^cAnd they *deceitfully* sought to turn him away from his guests. So We blinded their eyes, and said, 'Taste ye now My punishment and My warning.'⁴⁰²⁹

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَّكِرٍ ۝٣٣

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ بِالنَّذْرِ ۝٣٤

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَاصِبًا إِلَّا آلَ لُوطٍ نَجَّيْنَاهُمْ بِسَحَرٍ ۝٣٥

نِعْمَةٌ مِّنْ عِندِنَا ۚ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي مَنْ شَكَرَ ۝٣٦

وَلَقَدْ أَنْذَرَهُمْ بَطْشَتَنَا فَتَمَارَوْا بِالنَّذْرِ ۝٣٧

وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدُوهُ عَنْ ضَيْفِهِ فَطَمَسْنَا أَعْيُنَهُمْ فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِي وَنُذِرٍ ۝٣٨

^a7:83; 26:161; 29:30. ^b25:41; 26:174. ^c11:79; 15:69.

part. from احتظر which is derived from حظر which means, he forbade, he prohibited. احتظر means he took for himself an enclosure. به احتظر means, he took it for protection محظر means, a maker of enclosure. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse signifies either that the disbelievers were completely crushed or that they were as worthless in the sight of God as whittled down and crushed stubble, collected by a maker of hedges.

4029. Important Words:

طمسنا أعينهم (We blinded their eyes). طمس means, it quitted its form or shape. طمس الرجل means, the man went to a distance or became distant. طمسه means, he obliterated the mark or trace thereof. طمس الغيم النجوم means, the clouds concealed the stars. See also 10:89.

Commentary:

Lot's people sought to take hold of his guests but it seems the latter went

39. ^aAnd there came upon them early in the morning a lasting punishment.⁴⁰³⁰

وَلَقَدْ صَبَّحَهُمْ بُكْرَةً عَذَابٌ مُسْتَقَرٌّ^{٤٠}

40. 'Now taste ye My punishment and My warning.'

فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِي وَنَذِيرِ^{٤١}

41. And, indeed, We have made the Quran easy to *understand and* to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed? ⁴⁰³¹

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ^{٤٢}

R. 3.

42. ^bAnd surely to the people of Pharaoh *also* came Warners.

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَ آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ النَّذِيرُ^{٤٣}

43. They rejected all Our Signs^c. So We seized them with the seizing of the Mighty, the Powerful.⁴⁰³²

كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا كُلِّهَا فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ أَخْذَ عَزِيزٍ مُقْتَدِرٍ^{٤٤}

^a11:82. ^b20:48; 26:17. ^c20:57.

into hiding and thus they could not be found out. Or that God so arranged that attention of Lot's people became diverted from them.

4030. Important Words:

صَبَّحَهُمْ (came upon them early in the morning). صَبَحَ (ṣabbaha) is the intensive form of صَبَحَ (ṣabaḥa). They say صَبَحَ الْقَوْمَ i.e. he came to the people or attacked them in the morning (Lane & Aqrab). See also 7:79.

4031. Commentary:

The account of each of the four peoples of antiquity with whose history the pagan Quraish were quite conversant—the peoples of Noah and Lot and the tribes of 'Ād and Thamūd—ends with a stern warning,

coupled with a pathetic appeal to them to learn a lesson from the fate of these peoples and not to reject the Message of the Quran which is revealed only for their good and rejection of which would land them into ruin.

4032. Commentary:

The use in the verse of the word مُقْتَدِرٍ (The Powerful) is very significant. Pharaoh was a very powerful monarch. He regarded himself as "the most high lord of the Israelites" (79:25). So the might of the real Omnipotent Lord of Moses and Aaron was pitted against that self-designated lord, and he was completely annihilated.

44. Are your disbelievers better than those? Or have you an immunity in the Scriptures?^a 4033

أَكْفَارُكُمْ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أُولَئِكَ أَمْ لَكُمْ
بَرَاءَةٌ فِي الزُّبُرِ ٤٤

45. Do they say, 'We are a victorious host?'

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ نَحْنُ جَمِيعٌ مُّنتَصِرُونَ ٤٥

46. ^bThe hosts shall soon be routed and will turn their backs in flight. 4034

سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ ٤٦

47. Aye, the Hour is their appointed time; and the Hour will be most calamitous and most bitter. 4035

بَلِ السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَذْهَى
وَأَمْرٌ ٤٧

^a2:81. ^b3:13; 8:37; 38:12.

4033. Important Words:

The verse repeats a warning to the pagan Quraish in another form. "Are you in any way better," it asks them, "than those who rejected Noah, Hūd, Lot or Moses. Or have you received a Divine promise recorded in the Divine Scriptures that you will not be punished for your rejection of the Holy Prophet"?

4034. Commentary:

The emphatic prophecy embodied in the verse is definitely about the crushing defeat which the Meccan army suffered at the hands of Muslims in the Battle of Badr. The odds were so heavy against the Muslims that when fighting began the Holy Prophet prayed to God in utmost humility and extreme agony, in a tent set up for him for this purpose, in the words: "O Lord, I humbly beseech Thee to fulfil Thy covenant and Thy promise. If this small band of Muslims were

destroyed, Thou wilt never be worshipped again on this earth" (Bukhārī & Muslim). After having finished the prayer, the Holy Prophet came out of the tent and facing the field of battle recited the verse سيهزم الجمع و يولون الدبر i.e. the hosts shall soon be routed and shall turn their backs in flight.

4035. Important Words:

أذهى (most calamitous) is derived from أذهى. They say ما دهاك i.e. what has befallen thee. The Arabs say دهنه داهية i.e. a calamity befell him. أذهى means, more or most calamitous (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The defeat at Badr was indeed a most formidable and calamitous misfortune for the Quraish. Their power and prestige sustained a crushing blow. Most of their leaders and prominent chiefs were killed. Having suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of a handful of

48. Surely, the guilty are in *manifest* error and gone mad. إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعْرٍ ﴿٤٨﴾

4036

49. On the day when they will be dragged into the Fire on their faces, *and it will be said to them, 'Taste ye the touch of Hell.'* يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ ۖ ذُوقُوا مَسَّ سَقَرَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50. Verily, We have created everything in *due* measure^a. إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

^a15:22; 25:3; 80:20.

inexperienced and ill-equipped Muslims, they felt deeply humiliated and mortified. The prophecy was fulfilled to the very letter.

The الساعة (Hour) mentioned in this and the opening verse of the *Sūrah* refers to the Battle of Badr.

4036. Commentary:

The disbelievers are described in v. 25 above as in the habit of saying in contempt and mockery that it would be madness on their part to give allegiance to or follow an ordinary man from among themselves. In the verse under comment tables are turned upon them, and they are told that rejection and not acceptance of a Divine Messenger is folly and madness.

4037. Important Words:

يسحبون (dragged) is derived from سحب. They say سحبه i.e. he dragged or drew it along upon the ground. سحب سحبه means the wind drew along the dust upon the ground. One would say جاء يسحب ذيله i.e. he came dragging along his skirt on the ground, i.e. walking haughtily (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

How remarkably and to the very letter the prophecy made in this verse was fulfilled! It is reported that of the Quraishite leaders and chiefs who were killed in the Battle of Badr, 24 were thrown in a pit for burial, and before he left the field of battle, the Holy Prophet went to the pit, and calling each of them by name addressed them in the words: هل وجدتم ما وعدكم ربكم حقاً فإني وجدت ما وعدني ربي حقاً i.e. Have you found true what your Lord promised you; I have indeed, found true what my Lord promised me (Bukhārī, *Kitābul-Maghāzī*). He further said: يا أهل القليب بئس عشيرة النبي كنتم لبيكم، كذبتُموني وصدقني الناس وأخرجتموني وآواني الناس i.e. "O fellows of the pit! you proved to be bad relatives of your Prophet. You declared me to be a liar but other people testified to my truth. You expelled me, but other people gave me asylum. You fought against me and other people helped me" (Ṭabarī).

4038. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that there is a determined measure for

51. And Our command is carried out by only one word, like the twinkling of an eye.^a **4039**

وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ ﴿٥١﴾

52. And indeed We have destroyed people *before you*—*who were* like unto you. But is there anyone who would take heed?

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا أَشْيَاءَكُمْ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدْكِرٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

53. ^bAnd everything they have done is *recorded* in the Books. **4040**

وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ ﴿٥٣﴾

54. And every matter, small and great, is written down.

وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ مُسْتَطَرٌّ ﴿٥٤﴾

55. Verily, the righteous will be in the midst of Gardens and streams. **4041**

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَهَرٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

^a7:188; 16:78. ^b18:50; 45:30.

everything. It has an appointed time and place. It is when the cup of iniquities of disbelievers becomes full, that they are seized with Divine punishment. God alone knows when and how to punish the wicked people. For the pagan Quraish, the Day of Badr was the appointed hour of punishment.

4039. Commentary:

The defeat of the Meccans at the battlefield of Badr came like a bolt from the blue, so sudden and swift it was and so complete and destructive. The glory of Kedar departed, as if in the twinkling of an eye.

4040. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the former Scriptures contain a record of

the treatment the disbelievers meted out to God's Prophets and their followers and also of the sad end to which they came on account of their rejection of the Divine Message and their iniquities and evil deeds.

The verse may also signify that the smallest action of man, good or bad, produces its inevitable result, according to the law of cause and effect, and, its indelible impress is preserved in the atmosphere.

4041. Important Words:

مُدْكِرٌ besides the meaning given in the text, also means, amplitude; light (Aqrab).

Commentary:

After dealing with the punishment that overtakes disbelievers on account

56. In the seat of truth with an
Omnipotent King.**4042**

فِي مَقْعَدٍ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ مَلِكٍ
مُّقْتَدِرٍ

of their rejection of the Divine
Message and their evil deeds, the
verse refers to the Divine favours and
blessings that are bestowed upon the

righteous, in this and the next world.

4042. Important Words:

مَلِك (King) is the intensive form of
مَالِك which means, master.

CHAPTER 55

AR-RAḤMĀN

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

Being the 6th of the special group of the *Sūrahs* which begin with *Sūrah Qāf* and end with *Al-Wāqī‘ah*, and which were revealed, more or less at the same time at Mecca, in the early years of the Call, the *Sūrah* has close resemblance with other members of the group in subject matter, and deals, like them, with the basic principles of Islam—Divine attributes, particularly God’s Unity, and with Resurrection, and Revelation. The *Sūrah* bears such close resemblance with the five previous *Sūrahs*, particularly with the immediately preceding one—*Sūrah Al-Qamar*—that it seems to complement and complete its subject matter. In *Sūrah Al-Qamar* instances were given of the peoples of some Prophets of antiquity with whom the Arabs were quite familiar and who were punished for rejecting the Divine Message, and then the pagan Quraish were asked, would they not benefit from their fate and accept the Quranic Message which was quite easy to understand and to follow. The present *Sūrah* gives the reasons why the Quran was revealed.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with the Divine attribute—Ar-Raḥmān, signifying that after having created the universe, God created man, the apex and crown of all creation, and that the creation of man was the result of God’s beneficence. After man’s creation, God revealed Himself to him through His Prophets and Messengers, because he was unable to attain the sublime object of his creation and to fulfil his high destiny without being guided to his great goal by Divine revelation. Prophethood found its most complete and perfect manifestation in the person of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad to whom God gave the Quran, the Last and Final Code of Divine laws for the guidance of the whole of humanity for all time. But God’s gifts to man did not end with his creation. The Beneficent God made the whole universe subservient to him. The heavens with all the celestial bodies, and the earth with all its treasures, the deep seas and high mountains were all created for his sake. Over and above that, God endowed man with great intellectual and discretionary powers so that by sifting right from wrong he might follow Divine guidance and thus attain the object of his creation. But man seems to be so constituted that instead of benefiting from the endless vistas of spiritual progress and development opened up to him by the Gracious, Beneficent and Merciful Providence, he, in his conceit and arrogance seeks to ignore and defy Divine laws, and consequently brings down upon himself God’s punishment. The

disobedience and defiance of Divine laws, the *Sūrah* hints, will assume a most heinous form in time to come, which seems to be the present time, and man will be visited with such destructive and annihilating punishment as he had not known before. But just as heavenly punishment which will be meted out to the guilty and the iniquitous will be most grievous and frightful, so would the Divine favours that will be bestowed upon the righteous and the God-fearing in that age of Mammon-worship and of hankering after pleasures of the flesh, be beyond measure or count, and thus both Divine punishment and favours would show that God is "Swift at reckoning and the Master of Glory and Honour." The *Sūrah* seems to deal particularly with the time when the power and prestige of western nations will be at their highest. And they will add to their wealth and glory by making extensive use of the great highways of the oceans and by harnessing the forces of nature.



(AR-RAḤMĀN)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.⁴⁰⁴³

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. The Gracious *God*

الرَّحْمَنُ ②

3. He taught the Quran.⁴⁰⁴⁴

عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ③

4. He created man.^{b4045}

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ④

5. He taught him plain speech.⁴⁰⁴⁶

عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ⑤

6. The sun and the moon *run their courses* according to a fixed reckoning.^{c4047}

الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ ⑥

7. And the stemless plants and the trees humbly submit *to His will*.^{d 4048}

وَالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ ⑦

^aSee 1:1. ^b96:3. ^c6:97; 10:6; 36:39-40. ^d13:16; 16:49; 22:19.

4043. Commentary:

See 1:1.

4044. Commentary:

God revealed Himself through His Prophets and Messengers to whom He gave His Word. The Quran constituted the culmination of Divine revelation. This revelation of God to man through His Word was not due to any good act on man's part. It was a sheer gift flowing from God's beneficence.

4045. Commentary:

The word الانسان (man), besides its general connotation, may also signify here "the Perfect Man," i.e. the Holy Prophet, in whom Divine attributes

found their most perfect and complete manifestation. The verse thus signifies that out of beneficence God created man in order that he may rise to the highest peaks of spiritual development and may reflect in his person Divine attributes.

4046. Commentary:

Man's creation and his power to express himself was also due to God's beneficence.

4047. Commentary:

See next verse.

4048. Commentary:

The verse, read along with the preceding one, shows that from the largest celestial body to the smallest

8. And the heaven He has raised high and set up the measure,^a 4049

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ ۝٨

9. That you may not transgress the measure. 4050

أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ ۝٩

10. So weigh *all things* with justice and fall not short of the measure.^b 4051

وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ ۝١٠

^a42:18; 57:26. ^b11:85-86; 17:36; 26:182; 83:2-4.

stemless plant, all things are subject to certain laws and they perform regularly, punctually, and unerringly their allotted tasks. In the huge solar system, which is but one of millions of such systems, every orb proceeds safely on its destined course and never deviates from it. A little disturbance in or deviation from their set course would bring down in pieces the whole universe which has been created for the service of man. It is inconceivable, therefore, that man for whose service this vast and complicated but perfectly regulated universe has been brought into being should have been created without a purpose. The life of man surely has a grand divine aim to which repeated reference has been made in the Quran.

4049. Important Words:

وزن (measure) is derived from الميزان. They say وزن الشيء i.e. he raised the thing in order to know its weight or measure. وزن الرجل (wazuna), means, the man was or became of sound and weighty opinion. وزن means, weight; measure; توازن means to be equal to one another in weight, measure or value; equilibrium; الميزان means, balance; measure; counterpart;

justice. They say, استقام ميزان النهار i.e. it was midday (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The whole universe is subject to a uniform law and all its constituent parts unite to form a glorious harmony of structure and motion. If this harmony or equilibrium between different things is in the least disturbed, the whole universe would fall to pieces. But God has kept all the laws that regulate the world under His exclusive control, beyond the reach of man.

4050. Commentary:

See next verse.

4051. Commentary:

As there is an all-comprehensive harmony in the whole universe, so is man—the crown and object of creation—enjoined to maintain a just balance and to treat with equity and justice his fellow beings, giving, every one his due, and to avoid extremes, and follow the golden mean in the discharge of his duties towards his Creator. This is the significance of the expressions, "you may not transgress the measure" and "fall not short of measure."

11. And He has set the earth for
His creatures;⁴⁰⁵²

وَالْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ ﴿١١﴾

12. Therein are *all kinds of*
fruit^a and palm-trees with
sheaths,⁴⁰⁵³

فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ ۖ وَالنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ ﴿١٢﴾

13. And grain with *its* husk and
fragrant plants.⁴⁰⁵⁴

وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ ﴿١٣﴾

14. Which, then, of the favours
of your Lord will you twain
deny, *O men and Jinn*?⁴⁰⁵⁵

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

^a50:10-11.

4052. Important Words:

الانام (creatures) means, mankind or the jinn or all the creatures that are on the surface of the earth; everything having a soul (Lane & Aqrab).

4053. Commentary:

See next verse.

4054. Important Words:

العصف (husk) is inf. noun from عصف (‘asafa). They say عصف الريح i.e. the wind blew violently or vehemently. The Arabs say عصف بهم الدهر i.e. the time destroyed them. عصف الزرع means, he cut the corn before it attained maturity. عصف means, the herb of corn or the seed-produce; the husk; straw; the stalk or stem of corn (Lane & Aqrab).

الريحان (fragrant plants) is derived from راح and means, any sweet-smelling plant; or its extremities when the first of its blossoms come forth upon it or its leaves; offspring; a bounty or gift of God; sustenance (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

This and the preceding two verses

briefly point to all those natural things which are so essential for the physical development of man, عصف being the fodder for animals which form an indispensable part of his life. The verses purport to say that when, out of His unbounded grace and beneficence, God has created all the things that are necessary for man’s physical life, is inconceivable that He should have omitted to provide the things which are so essential for his spiritual growth, which is the very aim and object of his life. For that purpose God sent His Messengers and Prophets and through them He revealed Himself. The words العصف (husk) and الريحان (fragrance) may point respectively to the physical and spiritual needs and requirements of man.

4055. Important Words:

إلى (favours) is the plural of إله (ilwun) or إله (alwun) and إله (ilyun) or إله (alyun), etc., which all mean, benefit, benefaction, favour, boon or blessing; might or power; attribute or good quality. An Arab poet says:

15. He created man from dry ringing clay *which is* like baked pottery^a. 4056

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ ۝

^a6:3; 15:27, 29.

هم الملوك وأبناء الملوك لهم
فضل على الناس في الآلاء والنعم

i.e. they are kings and the sons of kings; they possess superiority over people on account of their might (or attributes) and gifts (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The dual form in تكذبان may have been used for the two classes of jinn and men referred to in v.34 below, or it may signify two classes of men only, viz. believers and disbelievers, leaders and their followers, the rich and the poor, or the white or coloured races. Or it may have been used to impart emphasis to denote the dignity of the commandment embodied in the sentence. Such dual form is generally used in the Arabic language. See also 50:25.

The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that when the verse فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَان is recited the believers present should respond by the expression: اللهم ولا بشيء من آلاؤك تكذب فلك الحمد i.e. "none of Thy favours, Our Lord, do we deny and for Thee is all praise." (Ibn Kathīr).

4056. Important Words:

صلصال (ringing clay) is derived from صلصل which means, it sounded or made a clashing, ringing, tinkling or repeated sound. صلصال means, clay not made into pottery, so called because of its making a sound; or clay mixed with sand which, when it becomes dry, makes a sound and when baked

is فخار or dry clay that makes a sound by reason of its dryness (Lane & Aqrab). See also 15:29.

الفخار (baked pottery) is derived from فخر i.e. he boasted or recounted his glorious deeds or qualities, or he arrogated to himself greatness and nobility; he magnified himself by boasting. فخر (fakhira) means, he disdained or scorned. فخار means, baked pottery or baked vessels of clay, applied specially to empty vessels (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

After having mentioned the creation of the celestial firmament and of the placing in it of the sun and the moon and of their regular and punctual movements, followed by a mention of the vegetables spreading of the earth and of all the that grow on it, the *Sūrah*, in the present verse proceeds to refer to the coming into existence of man, the climax, of all creation.

The creation of man from dry, ringing (صلصال) may signify that he has been created from matter in which the faculty and attribute of speech lay latent. As صلصال emits a sound only when struck with something extraneous, its use here is intended to hint that man's power to respond is subject to his being able to receive the Divine Call.

Three words have been used in the Quran to express the different stages

16. And the Jinn He created from the flame of fire.^a 4057

وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِنْ مَّارِجٍ مِنْ نَّارٍ ۖ

17. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبُ ۚ

18. The Lord of the two Easts and the Lord of the two Wests!^b 4058

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ ۚ

19. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبُ ۚ

20. ^cHe has made the two bodies of water flow. They will *one day* meet. 4059

مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ ۚ

^a7:13; 15:28; 38:77. ^b2:116; 26:29. ^c25:54; 27:62; 35:13.

of the creation, and of the spiritual development of man. The first stage is expressed by the words خلقه من تراب i.e. God created him out of dust (3:60). The second stage is described by the expression خلقكم من طين i.e. He created you from clay (6:3), which means that after having received a sprinkling of Divine Word man attained the power of discrimination by which he could distinguish between right and wrong. At the third stage which is called the stage of فحار (baked pottery) man is tested and tried and is made to pass through the fire of trials and tribulations. So it is after he has successfully passed the tests and has attained spiritual maturity that he is received into Divine Presence.

4057. Commentary:

For a detailed note on the creation of the jinn from fire, see 15:28.

4058. Commentary:

Every spot on earth, in relation to other spots, is an east and a west. This phenomenon is described as the two easts and the two wests. Moreover, the earth being round, the east of the Eastern Hemisphere is the west of the Western Hemisphere and the west of the Western Hemisphere is the east of the Eastern Hemisphere and thus there are two easts and two wests. In the modern political parlance the two easts may be the Near East and the Far East, and the two wests, Europe and America. The verse seems to signify that, God being the Lord of the whole world, the light of the Quran will first spread in the east and then will illumine the west and thus the "whole earth will shine with the light of her God" (39:70).

4059. Commentary:

See next verse.

21. Between them there is *at present* a barrier; they encroach not *one upon the other*.⁴⁰⁶⁰

بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَا يَبْغِيَانِ ﴿٢١﴾

22. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. There come out from them pearls and coral.⁴⁰⁶¹

يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

4060. Commentary:

"The two bodies of water" referred to in the preceding verse may be the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea on the one hand and the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean on the other, particularly the former two seas. The verse embodies a great prophecy which was remarkably fulfilled in the latter half of the nineteenth century when the Suez and the Panama Canals were constructed, the former linking the first two seas and the latter the mighty Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The world had to wait for thirteen long centuries to see the fulfilment of this prophecy, in an age of new and great discoveries and inventions in the material world. It was in the fitness of time that, concurrently, equally great discoveries should have been made in the spiritual world, the fulfilment of the above prophecy being one of them. Or البحرين (the two bodies of water) may signify the physical and spiritual sciences. In this sense of the

word the verses would mean that the two sciences—natural laws and Divine revelation, were mistakenly considered to be at logger heads, and a barrier seemed to have kept them apart, till, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the great Divine Reformer of the age, the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement, succeeded in lifting that barrier and by his powerful writings unfolded the mighty truth that, instead of being antagonistic, these two sciences were corroborative of, and complementary to, each other, the one being the Work of God, and the other His Word. In this way the two seas were made to join each other.

4061. Commentary:

Curiously enough pearls and corals are found in both the Suez and Panama Canals. Spiritually speaking, the verse would signify that physical sciences and Divine revelation both contain treasures of inestimable value.

25. And His are the lofty ships reared aloft on the sea like mountains.^a 4062

وَلَهُ الْجَوَارِ الْمُنشَآتُ فِي الْبَحْرِ
كَالْأَعْلَامِ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny? 4063

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

R. 2.

27. All that is on it (earth) will pass away.^b 4064

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

28. And there will remain *only* the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour. 4065

وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَلِ
وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٢٨﴾

^a16:15; 35:13; 42:33. ^b28:89.

4062. Important Words:

الجوار (ships) is the plural of جارية which is fem. act. part. from جرى which means, it flowed. جارية means, a ship because of its running upon the sea; the sun; a girl or young woman; a boon or blessing bestowed by God upon His servants, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

الاعلام is the plural of علم ('alamun) which is derived from علم ('alama). علمه means, he marked it. علم means, an impression or impress; a footstep, track or trace of thing erected on the way for guidance; a banner, flag or standard; a minaret; a mountain or long mountain; the chief of a people (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse contains a reference to modern "leviathans", which ride the seas like mountains. The *Sūrah* seems to deal with the progress and prosperity of the western nations

which is the result of their making use of the great sea routes for extending their commerce and trade.

4063. Commentary:

The verse constitutes a befitting sequel to the description of the great boons and blessings bestowed upon mankind by God as mentioned in the foregoing verses.

4064. Commentary:

Man with all his great works and achievements and all those things that have been created for his use and service, in fact, the whole universe, is subject to decay and death and is eventually destined to perish. God alone will abide because He is Self-Subsisting, All-Sustaining, Independent and Besought of all. See next verse.

4065. Commentary:

For وجه (person) see 2:113. Among other things the word means, "that which is under the care of God" or "to which God directs His attention." In

29. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٢٩﴾

30. Of Him do beg all that are in the heavens and the earth. Everyday He *reveals Himself* in a different state. **4066**

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

31. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٣١﴾

32. Soon shall We attend to you, O ye two big groups! **4067**

سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَ الثَّقَلَيْنِ ﴿٣٢﴾

28:89, we have كل شيء هالك الا وجهه i.e. everything will perish except that which is under the care and protection of God or that by which His pleasure is sought. The word also means, the thing itself; object and motive; favour or countenance as جعل ذلك لوجه الله i.e. he did it in order to obtain the favour of God (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse embodies a very sound and solid argument to prove and support God's existence. It purports to say that since the earth is to be reduced to nothing and heavenly bodies all brought to nought and the whole material universe made non-existent, still human reason demands that there should be a being who should remain and who should never die nor be subject to change or decay. Such a Being is God Who created the whole universe and Who is the First and Final Cause of all things. The present and the previous verse point to two immutable laws of nature working simultaneously, viz. (1) everything is

subject to decline, decadence and death, and (2) compliance with divine laws ensures continuity of life.

4066. Commentary:

The verse signifies that all creatures depend for their life and sustenance on God Who is their Creator, Sustainer and Nourisher. He alone is Independent and the Besought of all. His attributes know no limit or count, and keep finding their manifestations in diverse ways all the time. He is very Kind and Merciful to him who deserves His Mercy and is Severe in punishing him who incurs His displeasure.

4067. Important Words:

سنفرغ (We shall soon attend) is فرغ من العمل (We shall soon attend) is formed from فرغ. They say فرغ له و اليه i.e. he was or became free from occupation; he became free or unoccupied. فرغ له و اليه means, he made him or it his exclusive object to which he directed himself (Lane & Aqrab).

الثقلان (two big groups). ثقل means, it was or became heavy, weighty or

33. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34. O company of Jinn and men! if you have power to go beyond the confines of the heavens and the earth, then do go. But you cannot go save with authority.⁴⁰⁶⁸

يَمْعَشَرِ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْقُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْقُذُوا ۖ لَا تَنْقُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَنِ ﴿٣٤﴾

ponderous; it was or became heavy, weighty or preponderant ideally; it was or became onerous, oppressive or grievous; he was or became heavy, slow, lazy; wanting in activity, ability or intelligence; he became stupid. الفقلان meaning two weighty things, may signify "the men" and "the jinn" as the context shows, or it may signify the Arabs and the non-Arabs (Lane, Aqrab & Muḥīt). In the present political parlance, however, the word may signify the two main blocs—Russia and its satellites on one side and the United States of America and its allies on the other. The context seems to support this meaning. The word may also signify the capitalist and the labour classes.

Commentary:

The verse seems to hold a severe warning to the United States of America with its allies, and Communist Russia with its satellites. The whole world practically has become divided into these two main groups; every one of the so-called neutral countries is inclined to one or the other of them. From the way in which these two great powers are behaving, it seems that the world is

perilously standing on the brink of an abyss. Any day they may be locked into mortal conflict, completely destroying man's accumulated labours of centuries spent in developing arts and sciences, and inevitably rendering life on earth practically extinct.

4068. Important Words:

عاشر (company) is derived from معشر and عاشر هم means, he mixed with them; consorted with them; held social and familiar intercourse with them. معشر among other things means, any company of men whose state of circumstances is one (Lane & Aqrab). This meaning of the word shows that معشر الجن و الانس are the two classes of men and signify the same as الفقلان mentioned in v. 32 above.

Commentary:

The verse has been variously interpreted: According to one interpretation the scientists and philosophers who are proud of the great advance they have made in material sciences have been warned that they cannot however high they might rise in knowledge and science, so completely comprehend the laws

35. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٥٥﴾

36. There shall be sent against you a flame of fire, and smoke; and you shall not be able to help yourselves. **4069**

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شَوَاظٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ
فَلَا تَنْتَصِرَانِ ﴿٥٦﴾

37. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٥٧﴾

of nature governing the universe as to overpower and master them. Try as they might, they will fail in their quest. This interpretation is in accordance with the context. According to another interpretation which also agrees with the context, the verse warns sinners: let them dare to break through the confines of the heavens and earth, they shall not be able to defy divine laws with impunity and escape Divine punishment. It may also point to the making of rockets, sputniks. etc., by means of which the Russians and the Americans seek to reach heavenly bodies. They are told that at best they can reach only those planets which are visible to human eye. Beyond that their efforts shall fail. God's universe is unfathomable.

4069. Important Words:

شَوَاظ (flame) is derived from شَاظ. They say شَاظُ بَغْلَانٍ i.e. he abused such a one and accused him. شَاظُ الْغَضَبِ means, he became excited; his anger became enkindled. شَوَاظ means, flame or fire without smoke; heat of fire or sun; flame of fire; thirst or vehement thirst

(Lane & Aqrab).

نُحَاس (smoke) is derived from نُحَس. They say أَنُحَسَتِ النَّارُ i.e. the fire had much smoke. نُحَاس means, molten copper; fire; sparks that fall from brass or iron when it is beaten with the hammer; smoke; smoke in which there is no flame. (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary:

The verse points to the most destructive and dreadful punishment that might overtake the two hostile camps, if they did not desist from defying Divine commandments. God's wrath has become excited for "what man has wrought with his hands" (30:42), and the world seems to stand on the brink of a terrible conflagration which threatens to consume in its flames the entire human civilization and to make life extinct. Man had a foretaste of Divine punishment in the last two World Wars but what is yet in store for him staggers imagination. The verse gives a clear picture of the coming catastrophe in the form of nuclear and cosmic horrors. The words فَلَا تَنْتَصِرَانِ

38. And when the heaven is rent asunder^a, and becomes red like red hide—**4070**

فَإِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً
كَالدِّهَانِ ۝٣٨

39. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ۝٣٩

40. On that day neither man nor Jinn will be asked about his sin. **4071**

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ إِنْسٌ
وَلَا جَانٌّ ۝٤٠

41. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ۝٤١

42. The guilty will be known by their marks, and they will be seized by the forelocks and the feet. **4072**

يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ بِسِيمِهِمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ
بِالنَّوَاصِي وَالْأَقْدَامِ ۝٤٢

43. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ۝٤٣

44. This is the Hell which the guilty deny^b,

هَذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا
الْمُجْرِمُونَ ۝٤٤

^a69:17; 84:2. ^b52:15.

signify that the two hostile camps will not be able to escape God's punishment, try as they might.

4070. Commentary:

What a graphic picture of the threatened punishment!

4071. Commentary:

The verse means that the misdeeds of the guilty will be writ large on their faces so that they will not be asked whether or not they had

committed those crimes. As mentioned elsewhere in the Quran (41:21), the very organs of the bodies of disbelievers will bear witness against them. The next verse further explains this point.

4072. Important Words:

النواصي (forelocks) is the plural of ناصية. The expression أخذ بناصيته is used to denote one's extreme disgrace and humiliation (Lane & Aqrab).

45. Between it and fierce boiling water^a will they go round.⁴⁰⁷³

يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ ۚ إِنَّ

46. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

عِ

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ۚ

R. 3.

47. But for him who fears to stand before his Lord there are two Gardens^b—⁴⁰⁷⁴

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتَيْنِ ۚ

48. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ۚ

^a22:20; 44:49; 56:43. ^b79:41-42.

4073. Commentary:

The foregoing few verses together with the present one seem to point to the state of restlessness which will seize humanity when the two blocs referred to above are pitted against each other and the fear of atomic war will, like the Sword of Damocles, hang over their heads. The present international groupings and tensions are bound to lead to an armed conflict of unparalleled destructiveness. The conflict itself would be a veritable Hell; but preparations for it have brought about conditions which are not far removed from perpetual torment of one kind or other.

As applied to the next world, the verse may mean that the evil deeds of disbelievers and their ill-gotten gains will assume the form of the fire of Hell and boiling water. They will burn in the fire of Hell and will be given boiling water to quench their thirst. See also 14:17-18.

4074. Commentary:

The foregoing verses have dealt with the very important subject, viz. that progress and advance in material sciences which makes man devote his whole attention and effort to the pursuit of physical pleasures and comforts and leads him away from God, results in loss of mental poise and peace which in the Quranic terminology is also called Hell—another name for international conflicts and wars. In the present and the following few verses we are told that pursuit of spiritual knowledge and higher moral values gives man perfect contentment and equanimity in this life and in the Hereafter.

The "two Gardens" referred to in the present verse may signify peace of mind which is the result of leading a good life and freedom from gnawing cares and anxieties which come in the wake of life spent in the

49. Having many varieties of trees.⁴⁰⁷⁵

ذَوَاتَا أَفْنَانٍ ﴿٤٩﴾

50. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51. In both of them there are two fountains flowing *freely*.⁴⁰⁷⁶

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِيْنَ ﴿٥١﴾

52. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

pursuit of material pleasures and comforts. One Paradise consists in giving up one's desires for the sake of God in this world and the other in being blessed with God's pleasure in the next. A true believer perpetually basks in the sun of God's grace in this life which cares cannot disturb. This is Paradise upon earth which is granted to a God-fearing man and in which he constantly dwells; the promised Heaven in the next world is only an image of the present Paradise, being an embodiment of the spiritual blessings which such a man enjoys in this life. It is to this paradisiacal state of a true believer that the two Quranic verses refer, viz. "We are your friends in this life and in the Hereafter," (41:32) and "for them are glad tidings in the present life and also in the Hereafter" (10:65).

The "two Gardens" may also refer to the mighty Byzantine and Iranian Empires of which the conquest was promised to the Muslims. The Holy Prophet in a vision was given the keys of the palaces of the Emperors of Constantinople and Iran. The

vision was literally fulfilled during the Caliphate of 'Umar when these countries were conquered by Muslim armies. The fact that in a ḥadīth, Sāiḥān and Jaiḥān, the two rivers of Iran; and Furāt (the Euphrates) and Nīl (the Nile) have been spoken of as the rivers of Paradise (Muslim), lends powerful support to the view that the "Gardens" spoken of in the verse were the fertile valleys watered by these two sets, each of two rivers.

4075. Commentary:

Just as in the present life true believers had undergone many kinds of sacrifice for the sake of their Lord and had done all sorts of good and righteous deeds, so in the next life those sacrifices and good works will assume the form of flowers and fruits of various hues and tastes. This seems to be the meaning of this verse.

4076. Commentary:

The "two fountains running freely" may be the spiritual embodiments of حقوق الله (the obligations owed to God) and حقوق العباد (the obligations a Muslim owes to his fellow beings) which the

53. Therein will be every *kind* of fruit in pairs^a.⁴⁰⁷⁷

فِيهِمَا مِنْ كُلِّ فَأْكِهَةٍ زَوْجَيْنِ ﴿٥٣﴾

54. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٥٤﴾

55. They will recline on *couches* over carpets,^b the linings of which will be of thick brocade. And the ripe fruit of the two Gardens will be within easy reach.⁴⁰⁷⁸

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَى فُرُشٍ بَطَاطِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ وَجَنَّاتٍ الْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

56. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٥٦﴾

^a44:56; 52:23; 56:21. ^b18:32; 52:21; 76:14; 83:24.

believers had fully and faithfully discharged in this life. The discharge of these two obligations would assume the form of two fountains in the Hereafter. As a true believer ceaselessly continues to discharge these obligations, the fountains have been depicted as constantly flowing.

4077. Commentary:

Again the word زوجان (pairs) may spiritually represent two kinds of righteous works of the believers—(1) those they had done for their own spiritual advancement and (2) those services which they had rendered to their fellow beings.

4078. Important Words:

جنى (ripe fruits) is derived from جنى. They say جنى الثمرة i.e. he gathered or plucked the fruit from the tree while it was fresh. جنى العلى means, he acquired eminence or nobility. جنى means,

whatever is gathered or plucked from the tree while fresh; fruit just gathered or plucked; fruit ready to be plucked; ripe fruit (Lane).

Commentary:

Three times the words "two Gardens" have been used in this *Sūrah*. This is to emphasize that apart from the great blessings and boons of Paradise in the next world, true believers will have all the good things of this world also. The *Sūrah* was revealed early at Mecca when only a few persons had accepted Islam and even those few were very poor and without worldly means and were being harried and harassed and most of them had to take refuge in Abyssinia from the bitter persecution of the Quraish. It was then that the promise was made to them that one day they would recline on couches placed on rich carpets. This Divine

57. Therein will *also* be *chaste maidens* of modest gaze,^a whom neither man nor Jinn will have touched before them—**4079**

فِيهِنَّ قَصْرَتِ الطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ
إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٥٧﴾

58. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

فَبَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكْذِبُنِ ﴿٥٨﴾

59. As if they were rubies and small pearls^b.**4080**

كَأَنَّهُنَّ الْيَاقُوتُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٥٩﴾

^a37:49; 38:53. ^b56:24.

promise was literally fulfilled in the lifetime of the very Muslims who, while at Mecca, did not know where to lay their heads.

The "inner linings being of thick brocade" implies a beautiful hint that the inner-self of a believer is purer and more beautiful than his outer-self.

4079. Commentary:

In the foregoing verses mention was made of gardens, couches, fruits, etc. that believers will get in the "two Gardens." In order to complete their peace and happiness, they will also enjoy the company of good companions. And there can be no better companion for a person than a beautiful and virtuous wife. The Quranic Paradise is not conclusively reserved for righteous men. Righteous women will be equally entitled to it.

It will be noticed that purity of heart of the companions of believers is given precedence over the beauty of their persons referred to in v.59. The expression قَصْرَتِ الطَّرْفِ signifies that their whole attention would be devoted to God and they would not

even cast a look at any other thing beside their Lord and Creator, and far from their bodies being touched by any man, even impure thoughts will not find access to their hearts, the word *جن* also signifying those invisible things that excite carnal passions in the mind. It is relevant to state here again that according to Islamic conception the blessings of Paradise would resemble the pleasures of the life on earth. There will be palaces, gardens, rivers, trees, fruits, wives, children, friends, etc., only the nature of these things would be different from that of the things of this world. They would be so highly spiritual that the human mind cannot conceive of them. But their existence cannot be denied. See also 32:18 & 52:21.

Incidentally, the verse repudiates the false idea that women will not go to Paradise.

4080. Commentary:

Whereas in v.57 above purity of mind and heart of the consorts of believers in Paradise has been mentioned, the verse under comment

60. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

61. Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness. **4081**

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ ﴿١١﴾

62. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

63. And besides these two, there are two *other* Gardens—**4082**

وَمِنْ دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ ﴿١٣﴾

64. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

speaks of the beauty of their persons. That women mentioned in these verses are the virtuous wives of believers in this life, is apparent from a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet, viz. نساء الدنيا أفضل من الحور العين i.e. the believing women of this world are superior to the ḥurīs of the next.

4081. Commentary:

How adequately and beautifully the blessings of Paradise have been summed up in this brief verse! The word "goodness" is inclusive and fully expressive of all the conceivable favours that will be bestowed upon believers in the next life, and what greater good there could be than the pleasure of God (رضوان الله) which believers will get in Paradise. (3:16)

According to a saying of the Holy Prophet, أحسان means, "worship God as if you are seeing Him or at least He is seeing you" (Mishkāt). This means that in all his deeds and actions God is constantly before the

eyes of a believer and as a reward for his actions he receives God's pleasure—the sum total of all the blessings of Heaven.

4082. Commentary:

The "two Gardens" mentioned in v.47, may be the Gardens of Paradise; the "two Gardens" referred to in this verse may be the gardens of this world. The Muslims were promised gardens in the next world and as a proof of the fulfilment of this Divine promise they were also promised the gardens of this world which indeed they came to possess when they conquered the fertile valleys of Syria and Iraq. But the description of the "two Gardens" mentioned in v.47 being different from that in the present verse shows that two categories of believers have been mentioned in this *Sūrah*; the believers to whom "Gardens" mentioned in v.47 have been promised seem to be of a higher spiritual status than those

65. Dark green with foliage.

4083

66. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

67. Therein *also* will be two springs gushing forth with water. 4084

68. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

مُدْهَامَتَيْنِ ۝

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ۝

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَّاخَتْنِ ۝

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ۝

to whom "Gardens" mentioned in the verse under comment have been promised. A careful study of the relevant verses clearly brings out this fact. These two classes of believers have been mentioned in the next *Sūrah*, in vv.11 and 28, respectively.

4083. Important Words:

مدھامتان (dark green with foliage) is derived from ادھام. They say ادھام الزرع i.e. the seed produce became of a dark green colour by reason of abundance of moisture or irrigation. ادھامت الروضة means, the meadow became of a dark green colour. حدیقة مدھامة means, a walled garden, having its green inclining to black (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Whereas the "Gardens" mentioned in v. 47 above are described as "having many varieties of trees" which points to the vast variety of the good works of the believers to whom they are promised, the "Gardens" mentioned in the verse under comment are described as "dark green

with foliage" which indicates the intensity of the goodness of their works.

4084. Important Words:

نضاختان (gushing forth with water) is derived from نضخ. They say نضخ الماء i.e. the water gushed forth from the fountain or boiled forth vehemently. عین نضاحة means, a copious spring of water or a spring that gushes forth or boils forth copiously (Lane).

Commentary:

In the present verse and in v. 51 above two different descriptions of the fountains and springs promised to believers have been given. In v. 51 fountains promised to believers have been described as flowing freely and ceaselessly while in the present verse these springs are described as gushing forth with water. This signifies that believers to whom springs mentioned in v. 51 have been promised are of a higher spiritual status than believers to whom springs mentioned in the present verse have been promised; since believers of former category are

69. In both of them there will be *all kinds of fruit*^a, and dates and pomegranates. **4085**

فِيهِمَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ ﴿٦٩﴾

70. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٧٠﴾

71. Therein will be *maidens*, good *and* beautiful—**4086**

فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَاتٌ حِسَانٌ ﴿٧١﴾

72. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٧٢﴾

73. Fair maidens with lovely black eyes, well-guarded in pavilions—**4087**

حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٣﴾

74. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٧٤﴾

75. Whom neither man nor Jinn will have touched before them—

لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٧٥﴾

^a36:58; 38:52; 43:74.

engaged in doing good to others ceaselessly and freely without any idea or expectation of reward while those of the latter class do good works out of natural impulse but the doing of good is mainly confined to themselves.

4085. Commentary:

Whereas in the "Gardens" referred to in v. 47 are to be found fruits of *every kind in pairs* (v. 53) fruits in the "Garden" mentioned in this verse are of a limited variety, especially dates and pomegranates.

4086. Commentary:

As compared with the words "good

and beautiful" used with regard to the maidens in the present verse which possess only a general connotation, the words "rubies and pearls" used in v.59 above have a particular significance and are expressive of beauty of special excellence.

4087. Commentary:

The words قاصرات الطرف (restraining their glances) in v. 57 evidently are expressive of chastity and modesty of a higher degree than the expression مقصورات في الخيام (confined to pavilions) in the verse under comment.

76. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٧٦﴾

77. "Reclining on green cushions and beautiful carpets.

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَى رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَعَبْقَرِيٍّ

4088

حِسَانٍ ﴿٧٧﴾

78. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?⁴⁰⁸⁹

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٧٨﴾

^aSee 55:55.

4088. Commentary:

عِبْقَرِي is relative noun from عبقّر, a place which the Arabs asserted to be the land of the jinn; hence it is applied as an epithet to anything wondered at or admired, for the skillfulness which it exhibits, or the excellence of its manufacture and its strength; or to any work great in estimation, and delicate. It is both singular and plural and the feminine is عبقرية. They say ثياب عبقرية i.e. clothes or garments of admirable manufacture, so called in relation to a certain town عبقّر in Yemen in which clothes or garments and carpets are figured and variegated and are of the utmost beauty. Thus عبقري means, a kind of carpet variously dyed and figured; perfect or complete applied to anything; a lord or chief of men; one who has none above him and is strong. فُلَمَّ أَرَّ عِبْقَرِي قَوْمَ means, this is a chief or Lord of a people. The word is also applied as an epithet denoting superlativeness of any quality. ظَلَمَ عِبْقَرِي means, an excessive tyranny. The Holy Prophet is reported to have related a dream, mentioning 'Umar and said: فُلَمَّ أَرَّ عِبْقَرِي i.e. I have not seen a chief of a

people do his wonderful deed. عبقري حسان means, beautiful variegated carpets (Lane & Aqrab).

Again the words used in v. 55 about believers show that they possess a greater dignity, respect and authority than those to whom the present verse refers. With this verse the comparison between the two categories of believers specifically mentioned in the next *Sūrah*, i.e. "the foremost" (56:11) and "those on the right hand" (56:28) comes to an end.

4089. Commentary:

It is not without significance that this verse has been used as many as 31 times in the present *Sūrah*. The *Sūrah* seems particularly to refer to the great favours and blessings which God has bestowed upon him. In view of these multifarious and multitudinous favours the repeated use of the verse seems quite appropriate. But the *Sūrah* also speaks of the unprecedentedly destructive Divine punishment in the form of atomic wars which will overtake man if he does not repent

79. Blessed is the name of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour.⁴⁰⁹⁰

تَبَرَّكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَالِ
وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٧٩﴾

and mend his ways. This repeated warning of an imminent danger is also a blessing in disguise.

4090. Commentary:

The verse signifies that those who benefit by the great favours that God

has bestowed upon them and walk in the path of truth and righteousness will be granted more favours by the Lord of Honour but those who, on the contrary, defy Divine laws and adopt evil ways will be punished by the Lord of Majesty.

CHAPTER 56

AL-WĀQI‘AH

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This is the last of the group of seven chapters beginning with *Sūrah* Qāf. These seven *Sūrahs* were revealed at Mecca, more or less at the same time, in the early years of the Holy Prophet’s ministry. Naturally, therefore, they are very much similar in tone and tenor; but, in no other case perhaps, is this similarity so marked as it is between this *Sūrah* and *Sūrah* Ar-Raḥmān. The subject in *Sūrah* Ar-Raḥmān is completed in this *Sūrah*, and thus the *Sūrah* forms a befitting sequel to *Sūrah* Ar-Raḥmān. In *Sūrah* Ar-Raḥmān, for instance, three groups of people—(a) those fortunate ones who are granted special nearness to God, (b) the general body of believers who have achieved Divine pleasure, and (c) the Rejecters of Divine Messengers—were referred to only by implication. In the present *Sūrah*, however, they have been expressly mentioned. The *Sūrah* takes its title, like the *Sūrahs* of this group, from its first verse, and like them, it deals particularly with the important subjects of the Resurrection, Revelation, and the Repudiation of idolatry, appropriately revealed early at Mecca when the preaching of the Quranic Message was directed exclusively to the idolatrous Quraish. The seven *Sūrahs* also contain prophecies about the great and glorious future of Islam, side by side with direct and emphatic mention of the inevitability of the Resurrection, thus drawing attention to the inescapable conclusion that the fulfilment of those prophecies would prove that the Resurrection is also an undeniable fact.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with a firm and emphatic declaration that the great and inevitable event which was foretold in the preceding *Sūrah* will most surely come to pass, and when it comes to pass the earth will be shaken to its depths, and the mountains shall be shattered, causing a new world to emerge from the ashes of the old. As a result of this great event people will be sorted out into three classes: (a) the fortunate ones enjoying God’s special nearness, (b) the true and righteous believers receiving handsome reward for their good deeds, and (c) the unfortunate disbelievers who rejected God’s Message and opposed and persecuted His Messengers being punished for their evil deeds. The *Sūrah* then proceeds to give a graphic description of the Divine blessings and favours in store for the first two classes, which is followed by a description of the punishment which will be meted out to the deniers of the Divine Message. Then, the *Sūrah* advances the usual argument of the creation of man from a seminal drop and of its development into a full-fledged human

being, to prove his second birth after death. Towards its end the *Sūrah* reveals to the subject with which it had begun and explains that the great reformation to which it had referred in the opening verses will be brought about by the Quran which is indubitably the revealed Word of God, and which is protected and guarded like a precious treasure, and the wealth of whose teachings is revealed only to the righteous and pure of heart. The *Sūrah* closes with a beautiful homily, viz. that when the inevitable end of all life is death, from which there is no escape, why should man be neglectful of that hard fact and consign God to oblivion?



(AL-WĀQI'AH)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. **4091**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the Event comes to pass^b—**4092**

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ②

3. None can say that its coming to pass is a lie^c—**4093**

لَيْسَ

لِيُوقَعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ③

4. *Some* it will bring low, *others* it will exalt. **4094**

خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b52:8; 70:2. ^c52:9; 70:3.

4091. Commentary:

See 1:1.

4092. Commentary:

The "Inevitable Event" referred to in the verse is the Final Resurrection. Or it may signify total annihilation of idolatry from Arabia and complete defeat and discomfiture of the idolatrous Quraish. It may also signify the appearance of a great religious Reformer when the forces of darkness are routed, particularly the great reformation brought about by the Holy Prophet.

4093. Commentary:

The word كاذبة is fem. act. part. from كذب and means, one who tells a lie. It is used here as مصدر to impart emphasis to its meaning (Jarīr). The verse means that nothing can avert that great event. Or that there is no belying its coming to pass or denying the fact that it will come to pass. Its happening is as sure as anything. It is a dead certainty.

4094. Commentary:

The verse means that the "Inevitable Event" referred to in the preceding verse will bring about a great revolution in the lives of men. A new world will come into being, the high and the mighty will be laid low and the despised and downtrodden will be exalted. In fact, the advent of every great Divine Reformer is attended with changes of far-reaching consequences. Elsewhere speaking about the object of Moses' advent the Quran says:

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ وَنُكِّنَ لَهُمْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ

i.e. And We desired to show favour unto those who had been considered weak in the earth, and to make them leaders and to make them inheritors of Our favours, and to establish them in the earth (28:6-7).

5. When the earth will be shaken *with a terrible shaking*^a, **4095**

إِذَا رَجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًّا ۝

6. And the mountains will be shattered—a *complete shattering*^b. **4096**

وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا ۝

7. They shall all become like dust particles scattered about, **4097**

فَكَانَتْ هَبَاءً مُنْبَثًّا ۝

8. And you shall be *divided into* three groups: **4098**

وَكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً ۝

9. *First*, those on the right hand—how *lucky* are those on the right hand!—**4099**

فَأَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ ۝ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ ۝

^a50:45; 84:4. ^b20:106; 70:10; 101:6.

4095. Important Words:

رَجَّتْ (shall be shaken). رَجَّه means, he put it in motion or in a state of commotion or agitation; he put it in a state of violent motion; or convulsion or made it to shake, quake or quiver. رَجَّ الباب means, he shook the door violently (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that the whole land of Arabia will be shaken to its foundations. Old beliefs, ideas, moral values, customs, ways of living, etc., will undergo a complete change. In fact, the whole old order will die, giving place to a completely new one.

The verse along with its predecessor and successors is equally applicable to Resurrection after death, to the Last Judgement.

4096. Important Words:

بُسَّتْ (shall be shattered). بَسَّه means, he crumbled it. بَسَّتِ الجبال بَسًّا means, the mountains shall be crumbled with a

vehement crumbling like flour and levelled to earth and reduced to powder and scattered in the wind (Lane).

Commentary:

الجبال (the high and the mighty) shall be laid low.

4097. Commentary:

What a graphic description of the great change that was to be brought about by the Holy Prophet, and of how the prophecy was fulfilled!

4098. Commentary:

The verse applies particularly to the time of the Holy Prophet. But it can also be applied to the time of every great Divine Reformer. Whenever a Prophet of God or a great Divine Reformer preaches his Message, people become divided into three groups which have been mentioned in detail in the verses that follow.

4099. Commentary:

In v. 28 below اصحاب الميمنة have been

10. *Second*, those on the left hand—how *unlucky* are those on the left hand!—**4100**

وَأَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ ۖ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ ۖ ط

11. *Third*, the foremost; they are the foremost; **4101**

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ ۖ

12. They will have achieved nearness to God.

أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۖ

13. *They will be* in the Gardens of Bliss—

فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ۖ

14. A large party from among the early *believers*, **4102**

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۖ

described as اصحاب اليمين i.e. fellows or companions of the right hand. Elsewhere (75:3) the Quran applies the term النفس اللوامة i.e. self-accusing spirit, to this group of believers, since they work out such a transformation in their souls as to become moral beings in the true sense of the word.

4100. Important Words:

اصحاب المشئمة (those on the left hand). مشئمة is derived from أشأم which means, he desired the left, as أيمن signifies, he desired the right. ما أشأمه means, how unlucky he is! مشئمة means, the left side or direction; contrary to يمينة and ميمنة. They say نظرت يمينة وشأمة i.e. I looked in the right and in the left direction (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In v. 42 this group of disbelievers have been called اصحاب الشمال i.e. companions of the left hand. In 12:54 the Quran describes them as النفس الامارة (the spirit prone to evil), i.e. those who choose not to walk in the light of wisdom and knowledge but are led into iniquities and immoral paths.

4101. Commentary:

السابقون (foremost) are those believers who have scaled the highest peaks of spiritual progress. They are completely united with their Creator and cannot, as it were, exist in separation from Him. In Quranic terminology (89:28) they are called النفس المطمئنة (the soul at rest). This is the highest stage of spiritual perfection which a believer can attain.

4102. Important Words:

ثلة (large party) is derived from ثل which means, he demolished a thing. ثلة means, a party or company of men or a large number of men. They say فلان لا يفرق بين الثلة و الثلة i.e. such a one does not distinguish between ثلة (thallatun), i.e. a flock of sheep, and ثلة (thullatun), i.e. a company of men.

Commentary:

The word الاولين may refer to the early Companions of the Holy Prophet or to the early Companions of any great Divine Reformer, preferably to the former.

15. And a few from the later ones,

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ ۝١٥

16. *Seated* on couches inwrought with gold and jewels, 4103

عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ ۝١٦

17. ^aReclining thereon facing each other.

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ ۝١٧

18. ^bThere will wait on them youths, who will not age, 4104

يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ ۝١٨

19. *Carrying* goblets^c and ewers and cups *filled* out of a flowing spring—

بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقٍ ۖ وَكَأْسٍ مِّنْ مَّعِينٍ ۝١٩

20. No headache will they get therefrom, nor will they be intoxicated^d—4105

لَا يَصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنْزِفُونَ ۝٢٠

^a37:45; 55:55; 76:14. ^b37:46; 76:20. ^c43:72; 76:16. ^d37:48.

4103. Commentary:

The blessings of Paradise to be bestowed upon السابقون i.e. those lucky believers who will be favoured with special Divine nearness mentioned in vv. 16-27 of the present *Sūrah* closely resemble those Divine gifts which have been mentioned in vv. 47-62 of *Sūrah* Ar-Raḥmān. This shows that the believers referred to in these verses of *Sūrah* Ar-Raḥmān are of the class of السابقون i.e. those who have been granted special nearness to God.

4104. Commentary:

The verse points to the innocence and perpetual freshness of the servants that will wait upon true believers.

4105. Important Words:

لا يصدعون (no headache will they get)

is derived from صدع (ṣada'a). صدعه means, he split it so as to divide it in halves. صدع الحق means, he spoke the truth openly or aloud, discriminating between it and falsehood. صدعه (ṣadda'a) means, it affected him with headache as though it made his head to split (Lane & Aqrab).

لا ينزفون (nor will they be intoxicated) is derived from نذت. They say نذت البئر (nazafat), i.e. the well became empty, all the water having been taken out of it. أنذ الرجل means, the man became intoxicated, the spring of his senses having exhausted; his argument became exhausted in litigation. نذ فلان (nuzifa) means, such a one became intoxicated, the root meaning of نذ (nazfun) being to become exhausted (Aqrab).

21. And *carrying* such fruits as they (the foremost believers) choose,^a

وَفَاكِهَةٍ مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22. And flesh of birds as they may desire^b.

وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. And *there will be* fair maidens with wide, lovely eyes,^c

وَحُورٌ عِينٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. Like pearls, well preserved,

كَامُثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمَكْنُونِ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. As a reward for what they did.⁴¹⁰⁶

جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. They will not hear therein any vain or sinful talk,^d

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْثِيمًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27. Except only the word of *salutation*, 'Peace, peace.'⁴¹⁰⁷

إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَامًا سَلَامًا ﴿٢٧﴾

^a52:23; 55:53. ^b52:23. ^c44:55; 52:21. ^d19:63; 78:36; 88:12.

4106. Commentary:

The verse signifies that in this world believers will have the blessings enumerated above because of their sacrifice and suffering for the cause of truth and in the next world the good deeds done by them in this world will assume the form of these blessings. The blessings mentioned in these verses (16-24) appear to be those which befit kings and princes, because they will be given to believers of the highest spiritual eminence.

4107. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse, like many other verses of the Quran, effectively repudiate all those foolish notions about a sensual Paradise which ignorant and evil-minded carpers and critics of Islam pretend to

find in the Quran, and gives an insight into its nature, essence and reality. The Heaven as conceived and promised to Muslims by the Quran would be a place of spiritual bliss where no sin, vain or idle talk, or lying will find access (78:36). All the blessings of Paradise would find their culmination and consummation in peace—complete peace of the mind and soul. And there could be no greater blessing than peace of mind. The Paradise promised to a Muslim has been designated as the "abode of peace" in the Quran (6:128); the highest stage of spiritual development to which a believer can rise is that of the "soul at peace" (89:28) and the greatest gift which the dwellers of Paradise will receive from God will be "peace" (36:59), because God Himself is the Author of peace

28. ^aAnd *as for* those on the right hand—how *lucky* are those on the right hand!—

وَأَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ۖ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ۖ

29. They will be amidst thornless lote-trees,⁴¹⁰⁸

فِي سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ ۖ

30. And clustered bananas,⁴¹⁰⁹

وَطَلْحٍ مَّنْضُودٍ ۖ

31. And extended shade,^b

وُظِلٍّ مَّمْدُودٍ ۖ

32. And flowing water,^c

وَمَاءٍ مَّسْكُوبٍ ۖ

33. And abundant fruit,^d

وَفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ ۖ

34. Neither failing, nor forbidden,⁴¹¹⁰

لَا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ ۖ

^a69:20; 84:8-9; 90:19. ^b4:58; 13:36. ^c88:13. ^dSee 56:21.

(59:24). Such is the sublime Quranic conception of Paradise.

4108. Important Words:

For سدر (lote-trees) see 53:17.

مخضود (thornless) is derived from خضد which means, he broke wood or a branch or twig or a soft thing so that its parts did not separate; he bent without breaking wood or a branch or twig. They say خضد الشجر i.e. he cut off or removed the thorns of the trees; مخضود means, a tree having its thorns removed, a thornless tree. The word also means, a tree having the branches bent by reason of the abundance of its fruit (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

When the shade of Lote-tree becomes dense and crowded, it is very pleasant and in the hot and dry climate of Arabia the tired and fatigued travellers take shelter and

find rest under it. The word سدر having been qualified by مخضود signifies that the trees of Paradise will not only give pleasant and plenteous shade but would also bend down on account of the abundance of their fruit, i.e. the blessings of Paradise would both be pleasant and plentiful. See also 53:17.

4109. Commentary:

Whereas lote-tree mentioned in the preceding verse grows in dry climate, the banana requires plenty of water for its growth. The combining of سدر and طلح signifies that the fruits of Paradise will not only be plentiful and delightful but will be found in all climatic conditions.

4110. Commentary:

The blessings promised to the inmates of Paradise in this and other *Sūrah*s of the Quran possess the

35. And *they will have* noble spouses—⁴¹¹¹

وَفُرُشٍ مَّرْقُوعَةٍ ط

36. Verily, We have created them a *good* creation,

إِنَّا أَنشَأْنَهُنَّ إِنشَاءً لَّ

37. And made them virgins,⁴¹¹²

فَجَعَلْنَهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا لَّ

38. Loving, of equal age^a ⁴¹¹³

عُرُبًا أَتْرَابًا لَّ

^a78:34.

following important qualities: (a) they will be in abundance; (b) they will be easily accessible and at the entire disposal of believers; (c) they will know no diminution or end; and (d) they will cause no discomfort or disease.

4111. Important Words:

فراش (spouses) is the plural of فراش which means, a thing spread on the ground for one to sit upon; a bed; a man's wife; a woman's husband; the master or owner of a female slave. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: الولد للفراش وللعاهر الحجر i.e. the child is for the husband or for the master of the bed who is the husband, or the owner of the woman, or for the bed; and for the adulterer shall be stone (Abū Dāwūd, *Kitābuṭ-Ṭalāq*), The word فراش also means, the nest of a bird; a house, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In order to complete their happiness and peace of mind, the believers will have for their companions pure, beautiful spouses of noble descent and high dignity. The promise may also be taken to have been fulfilled when the Byzantine and Persian

Empires fell to their victorious arms. In the next life the believers will have these things conformably to the spiritual conditions obtaining there.

4112. Important Words:

أبكار (virgins) is the plural of بكر (*bikrun*) which means, a virgin; a man who has not touched a woman; an unpierced pearl; etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

4113. Important Words:

عروباً (loving) is the plural of عروب which is derived from عرب ('ariba). They say عربت البئر i.e. the water of the well became abundant. عروب means, a woman who loves her husband passionately and excessively and is obedient to him; also a woman disobedient to her husband and unfaithful to him (Lane & Aqrab).

أتراب is the plural of ترب which is derived from ترب (*tariba*) which means, he was born at the same time with another, an equal in age; an equal; a match; a peer; having similar tastes, habits, views, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

A beautiful, chaste and faithful wife, having similar views and tastes

39. With those on the right hand:

ع
١٤

لِأَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ طع ٣٩

R. 2.

40. A large party from among the early *believers*,

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ٤٠

41. And a large party from the later ones.

وَأُثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ ط ٤١

42. *But as for* those on the left hand^a—how *unlucky* are those on the left hand!—**4114**

وَأَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ ط مَا أَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ ط ٤٢

43. *They will be* in the midst of scorching winds and scalding water^b, **4115**

فِي سَمُومٍ وَوَحْمِيمٍ ٤٣

44. And *under* the shadow of black smoke^c, **4116**

وَضَلٍّ مِّنْ يَّخْمُومٍ ٤٤

45. Neither cool nor of any good.

لَا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ ٤٥

46. Before this they lived a life of ease *and plenty*. **4117**

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ ط ٤٦

^a69:26; 84:11; 90:20. ^b22:20; 44:49; 55:45. ^c77:32.

and outlook on life with her husband is the greatest Divine blessing a person can possibly have. There will be good and virtuous women in Paradise, says the Quran, as there will be good and righteous men. It is good companionship that makes human life happy and complete.

4114. Commentary:

اصحاب الشمال is another name for اصحاب المشيمة—those on the left hand.

4115. Commentary:

The disbelievers in the heat of their passions indulged in all sorts of evil activities. That heat will take the form of hot water and scorching heat.

4116. Important Words:

يخمووم (black smoke) is derived from حم. They say حم الشحمة i.e. he melted the fat. يخمووم means, smoke or black smoke or intensely black smoke; a black mountain; the canopy that is extended over the inmates of Hell (Lane & Aqrab).

4117. Commentary:

The disbelievers fed fat on the hard-earned money of others, and in the pride and conceit of their wealth, prestige, and influence, arrogantly spurned the Divine Message. This and the next verse show that the root cause of all sins is inordinate desire

47. And used to persist in extreme sinfulness.

وَكَاثُوا يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى الْحِنثِ
الْعَظِيمِ ٤٧

48. And they were wont to say, 'What! when we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we indeed be raised again^a,⁴¹¹⁸

وَكَاثُوا يَقُولُونَ إِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا
وَعِظَامًا إِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ٤٨

49. 'And our fathers of yore too^b?

أَوِ آبَاؤُنَا الْأَوَّلُونَ ٤٩

50. Say, 'Yes, the earlier ones and the later ones

قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ ٥٠

51. 'Will all be gathered together unto the fixed time of an appointed day.

لَمَجْمُوعُونَ إِلَى مِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ
مَّعْلُومٍ ٥١

52. 'Then, O ye that have gone astray and have rejected *the truth*,

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَهْلُهَا الصَّالَتُونَ الْمَكْذِبُونَ ٥٢

53. 'You will surely eat of the tree of Zaqqūm^c,⁴¹¹⁹

لَا تَكُونُ مِنْ شَجَرٍ مِنْ زُقُومٍ ٥٣

^a17:50; 23:83; 37:17; 56:48. ^b37:18. ^c37:63; 44:44-45.

for wealth and the comforts and pleasures of life which prompts one to exploit other people and to deny accountability for one's actions in afterlife. For مترفين see 23:65 and 17:17.

4118. Commentary:

Denial of the Resurrection and afterlife whether by word of mouth or conduct is at the root of all sin and crime in the world. This is why, next to belief in the existence of God the greatest stress has been laid in the

Quran on life after death. There can be no real and effective check on sin, or incentive to good works, without a true and real belief in life after death.

4119. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that disbelievers indulged in all sorts of iniquitous activities; they, as it were, drained life to the dregs. Therefore, as a punishment, their bellies will be filled with fire and they will drink of the hot water which instead of quenching will increase their thirst.

54. 'And will fill your bellies therewith,⁴¹²⁰

فَمَا لِيُؤْنِ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

55. 'And will drink thereon of boiling water^a,

فَشَرِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٢﴾

56. 'Drinking like the drinking of the camels that suffer from insatiable thirst.'⁴¹²¹

فَشَرِبُونَ شُرْبَ الْهَيْمِ ﴿٤٣﴾

57. This will be their entertainment on the Day of Judgement.⁴¹²²

هَذَا نُزْلُهُمْ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿٤٤﴾

58. We have created you. Why, then, do you not accept *the truth*?⁴¹²³

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ فَلَوْلَا تُصَدِّقُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

^a37:68.

4120. Important Words:

الهييم (thirsty camels) is the plural of الهيم which is derived from هام which means, he went at random, not knowing where he was going, he became thirsty. الهيام means, (a) severe thirst; (b) dropsy; or a kind of disease from which camels suffer from insatiable thirst; (c) insanity caused by extreme love. رجل هيمان means, a thirsty man. رجل هائم means, a confused and perplexed man. الهيم means, thirsty camels, sandy plains which suck all water (Aqrah).

4121. Commentary:

This and the preceding three verses describe the punishment that will be meted out to the guilty in the afterlife, in a language which befits the enormity of their sins or crimes in the present life. They devoured what other people had earned with the sweat of their brows. They suffered from an insatiable lust for wealth,

amassing it by fair means or foul, and being proud of their riches rejected the Divine Message. As punishment for their sins, they will be given the tree of *Zaqqūm* to eat, which will burn their inside, and they will have scalding water to quench their thirst, and like diseased camels their thirst will remain unsatisfied.

4122. Commentary:

نزلهم (their entertainment) means, their provision and food. The expression seems to have been used ironically.

4123. Commentary:

With this verse begins a series of arguments in support of life after death. The first argument in the present verse is taken from the very subtle and wonderful phenomenon of man's birth, starting with a drop of semen and developing into a full-fledged human being,—the crown of all creation—having been equipped

59. What think ye of the sperm drop that you emit?^a

أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تُمْنُونَ^ط

60. Is it you who have created it or are We the Creator?^b

ءَأَنْتُمْ تَخْلُقُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْخَالِقُونَ^{١٠}

61. We have ordained death for all of you; and We cannot be forestalled.^c 4124

نَحْنُ قَدَرْنَا بَيْنَكُمْ الْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ^{١١}

62. From bringing in your place others like you,^d and from developing you into a form which at present you know not. 4125

عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُبَدِّلَ أَمْثَالَكُمْ وَنُنْشِئَكُمْ فِي مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ^{١٢}

63. And you have certainly known the first creation. Why, then, do you not reflect?⁴¹²⁶

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَىٰ فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ^{١٣}

^a75:38. ^b52:36. ^c71:5. ^d76:29.

with all moral and spiritual powers in order that he might assimilate and demonstrate in himself Divine attributes.

4124. Commentary:

The end of all physical life is death. This is the eternal law of God from which there is no escape. Death frees the human soul from the fetters and shackles of its physical habitat and enables it to start its journey on the road to spiritual development which knows no end.

4125. Commentary:

The disintegration of man's physical tabernacle does not mean the end of his life. Death is only a change of state or form. After its flight from the body the human soul is given another body, which, it is not possible for man to conceive. The verse may

also imply a warning to disbelievers that they should not remain lulled into a false state of complacency that they would continue to enjoy power, prestige and prosperity. The time was fast approaching when all their power would be broken and their glory would depart and another people—the Muslims—would take their place, and they could not conceive of this great change in their present prosperous condition. The fulfilment of this prophecy will constitute an argument in support of life after death.

4126. Commentary:

The verse reinforces the argument begun in the above-mentioned verses. It, in effect, says to disbelievers that they know that God created man from a mere sperm drop and endowed him with wonderful powers and attributes

64. Do you see what you sow?

4127

أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَحْرُثُونَ ۖ

65. Is it you who grow it or are We the Grower?

ءَأَنْتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهَا أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ ۝

66. If We so pleased, We could reduce it all to broken pieces,^a then you would keep lamenting:

4128

لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ حُطَامًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ ۝

67. 'We are ruined!

إِنَّا لَمُغْرَمُونَ ۝

68. 'Nay, we are deprived of everything.'

بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ ۝

69. Do you see the water which you drink?⁴¹²⁹

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ الْمَاءَ الَّذِي تَشْرَبُونَ ۖ

70. Is it you who send it down from the clouds, or are We the Sender?

ءَأَنْتُمْ أَنْزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ الْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْزِلُونَ ۝

^a57:21

to grow and develop, and yet they dare deny that the Great Creator could give him life again after his death. Does not this fact merit their reflection?

4127. Commentary:

After referring to the birth of man from very insignificant beginning, the *Sūrah*, from the present verse, proceeds to give a brief account of things upon which man's life on earth depends, which in fact, is a preparation for the eternal and everlasting life after death. There are three principal things upon which man's life in this world depends—food, water and fire. The first thing is food to which this verse refers.

4128. Important Words:

تفكّهون (you would keep lamenting) is

derived from فكه which means, he was or became cheerful, happy or free from straitness; jocose or was given to jesting and to laughing. منه تفكّه means, he wondered at it; he repented, grieved, lamented or regretted (Lane & Aqrab).

حطاماً (broken pieces) is derived from حطم. They say حطمه i.e. he broke it into pieces, he crushed it. حطام means, what is broken in pieces of dry things; fragments of eggs. حطام الدنيا means, the perishable goods of this world (Lane & Aqrab).

4129. Commentary:

Next to food, water is the most important thing upon which human life depends for its sustenance.

71. If We *so* pleased, We could make it bitter. Why, then, are you not grateful?^a 4130

لَوْ نَشَاءُ جَعَلْنَاهُ أَجَاًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

72. Do you see the fire which you kindle?^a 4131

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ النَّارَ الَّتِي تُورُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73. Is it you who produce the tree for it, or are We the Producer?

ءَأَنْتُمْ أَنْشَأْتُمْ شَجَرَتَهَا أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْشِئُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74. We have made it a reminder and a benefit for the wayfarers. 4132

نَحْنُ جَعَلْنَاهَا تَذْكِرَةً وَ مَتَاعًا لِلْمُقْوِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75. So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great^b.

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٥﴾

^a36:81. ^b69:53; 87:2.

4130. Commentary:

The sun makes the saltish and bitter water of oceans rise in the form of vapours which being buffeted by cold winds are turned into a cloud, and then fall as rain upon the dry and parched fields, and the seed which had lain buried deep in the ground sprouts and the sun causes it to grow into a smiling, flourishing crop. Who created the seas, the oceans, the wind and the warmth? It is all the work of the Great Creator and Sustainer, and yet ungrateful man has the hardihood to deny His beneficence; he refuses to believe that his life has a purpose to achieve, for which he will be given a new life after he has departed from this world.

4131. Commentary:

Fire plays a most important part in the life of man. Much of his physical

comfort depends upon it. It is a thing of very great utility, also of destruction if improperly used. In this mechanistic age, life is inconceivable without the use of fire. No industry, trade or travel is possible without it. Spiritually speaking, there is latent in man a spiritual fire in whose flames, if kept under control, all his evil passions and desires are consumed; it kindles in him a yearning of the soul to establish a true and real connection with its Creator.

4132. Important Words:

المقوين (wayfarers of the desert) is derived from قوى الرجل. They say الرجل قوى i.e. the man became extremely hungry. أقوى means, he alighted at a desolate place. اقوت الدار means, the house became empty of dwellers. أقوى القوم means, the provisions of the people were exhausted. القواء means, waste, barren land, ruin; hunger.

R. 3.

76. Nay, I swear by the shooting
of the stars—4133

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِمَوَاقِعِ النُّجُومِ ۖ

مقوين means, needy and hungry people; wayfarers of a desert or those who alight at a desolate place. بات القواء أو القوى means, he spent the night hungry or in a desert (Aqrab).

4133. Important Words:

لَا (nay) is generally used to impart emphasis to the oath, meaning that the thing which is going to be explained next is so self-evident that it does not need calling anything to bear witness to its truth. When the refutation of a certain hypothesis is intended لَا is used to signify that which is said before is not correct but the right thing is that which follows.

أقسم (I swear). For the significance and philosophy of oaths see 37:2; 41:2 and 91:2.

مواقع (shooting) is the plural of وقع which is derived from وقع which means, it fell. وقع means, a place or time where and when a thing happens (Aqrab).

النجوم (stars) is the plural of نجم which among other things means, a portion of the Quran (Mufradāt). See also 53:2.

Commentary:

In the foregoing verses it was pointed out that there lies hidden in the inmost recesses of the human heart a longing and yearning for eternity—death not being the end or goal of life—and that adequate provision has been made in nature for the preservation of man's body. The next few verses deal with his moral and spiritual development and

progress. For that purpose God has been sending His Prophets and Messengers and has been revealing to them teachings by acting upon which man could attain the object of his life, that is, continuous and eternal progress of his soul. The Quran is the Last and Complete and Perfect Divine Teaching. The verse swears by, and holds forth مواقع النجوم (portions of the Quran) as evidence to support and substantiate the claim that the Quran is eminently fitted to fulfil the grand object referred to above, as well as to establish its Divine origin. Taking مواقع النجوم as meaning, the place and time of the falling of stars, the verse signifies that it is an unfailing divine law that, at the time of the appearance of a great Divine Reformer or Prophet, stars fall in unusually large numbers, and that this happened in the time of the Holy Prophet. Before him it also happened in the time of Jesus, and, in our own time, when the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement announced his claim to be the Promised Reformer. النجوم may also mean those highly righteous persons among the followers of the Holy Prophet whom God favours with His special love and nearness. In this sense of the expression, the verse signifies that the treasures of divine knowledge and mysteries that are revealed to the Divinely-favoured ones constitute an irrefutable proof of the Quran being God's own revealed Word.

77. And, indeed, that is a grand oath, if you only knew—⁴¹³⁴

وَأِنَّهُ لَقَسَمٌ لِّتَوْعَلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

78. That this is indeed a noble Quran^a, ⁴¹³⁵

إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٨﴾

79. In a well-preserved Book^b, ⁴¹³⁶

فِي كِتَابٍ مَّكْنُونٍ ﴿٧٩﴾

^a85:22. ^b85:23.

4134. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that مواقع النجوم (shooting of the stars, or the places or times of their falling) constitutes evidence of the fact that the Quran is the revealed Word of God, if only the disbelievers had the intelligence to understand this simple fact.

4135. Commentary:

The word كريم meaning noble, honourable, liberal, generous, bounteous, the verse signifies that upon those who would act upon the teachings of this Noble Book will be bestowed bounteous blessings of God and that they will find a place of honour among the world's great nations.

4136. Commentary:

That the Quran is a well-preserved and well-protected Divinely revealed Book is an open challenge to the whole world which has remained unaccepted during the past fourteen centuries. No effort has been spared by its hostile critics to find fault with the purity of its text. But all efforts in this direction have led to but one inevitable—albeit unpalatable for its enemies—result that the Book which the Holy Prophet Muḥammad gave to the world fourteen hundred years

back has come down to us without the change of a single vowel. The Quran stands unique in this respect among all revealed Scriptures. Books other than the Quran have been interpolated, mutilated and tampered with. And this was natural, because their teachings were meant for particular peoples and for limited periods of time. But the Quran, being the Last Divine Message for the whole of mankind, should naturally have been vouchsafed full, complete and eternal protection. Elsewhere, the Quran has made the firm assertion that it enjoys Divine protection: "Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We are its Guardian" (15:10). The verse under comment along with 15:10 constitutes not only a forceful challenge but also a mighty prophecy that the Quranic text shall remain intact, which prophecy has been remarkably fulfilled. What adds weight and force to the prophecy is the fact that it was made at a time when even the art of writing had not much developed and that it was addressed to a people who did not even know how to read and write. "There is probably in the world no other book", says William Muir,

80. Which none shall touch except those who are purified.

4137

81. *"It is* a revelation from the Lord of the worlds.⁴¹³⁸

82. Is it this *Divine* discourse that you would reject^b?⁴¹³⁹

83. And do you make the denial thereof your livelihood?⁴¹⁴⁰

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ ۝

تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

أَفَبِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَنْتُمْ مُدْهِنُونَ ۝

وَتَجْعَلُونَ رِزْقَكُمْ أَنْكُمْ تُكَذِّبُونَ ۝

^a20:5; 26:193. ^b17:74; 68:10.

"which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text...There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text which Muḥammad himself gave forth and used...To compare their pure text with the various readings of our Scriptures, is to compare things between which there is no analogy."

"Efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Quran have failed" (Enc. Brit.).

The verse may also signify that the ideals and principles embodied in the Quran are inscribed in the book of nature, i.e. they are in complete harmony with natural laws. Like the laws of nature they are immutable and unalterable and cannot be defied with impunity. Or it may mean that the Quran is preserved in "the nature which God has bestowed upon man" (30:31). Human nature is based upon fundamental truths and has been endowed with the faculty to arrive at true judgements. A person who honestly calls human nature into action can easily recognize the truth of the Quran.

4137. Commentary:

The verse signifies that only those lucky ones who by leading righteous lives will have achieved purity of the heart will be granted true understanding of, and insight into, the meanings of the Quran, and they will be initiated into those spiritual mysteries of divine knowledge to which the impure of heart are denied access. Incidentally, one should not touch or read the Quran while one is not physically clean.

4138. Commentary:

The fact that the Quran is a "well-preserved Book" and that "none shall touch it except who are purified" constitutes a proof and a guarantee that "it is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds."

4139. Commentary:

The verse seems to administer a subtle rebuke to disbelievers that they are so inconsiderate that they reject a Book, i.e. the Quran, which possesses such excellences and beauties as are mentioned in the preceding verses.

4140. Commentary:

The rebuke administered to

84. Why, then, when *the soul of the dying man* reaches the throat,⁴¹⁴¹

فَلَوْلَا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلُقُومَ ﴿٨٥﴾

85. And you are at that moment looking on—⁴¹⁴²

وَأَنْتُمْ حِينِيذٍ تَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86. "And We are nearer to him than you, but you see not—

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87. Why, then, if you are not to be called to account,⁴¹⁴³

فَلَوْلَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِينِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88. You cannot bring it back, if you are truthful?

تَرْجِعُونَهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89. Now if he be of those who have attained nearness to God,

فَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

90. Then *for him* is comfort and fragrance of *happiness* and a Garden of Bliss;

فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّتْ نَعِيمٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

^a50:17.

disbelievers in the preceding verse has been continued here. They are told that they have become so degenerate that they do not accept the truth because they are afraid that by doing so they would be deprived of their means of livelihood. So it is for the sake of filthy lucre that they reject the Divine Message. Or the verse may mean that disbelievers have made rejection of truth something on which, as it were, their very lives depend. They will not accept it at any cost.

4141. Commentary:

The rebuke implied in the preceding two verses is continued. The disbelievers are told that they deny truth because they seem to think

that they will never die and will not be called to account for their denial. This and the next few verses contain a graphic picture of the moments when the soul departs from the body at death.

4142. Commentary:

This and the next verse constitute two parenthetical clauses.

4143. Important Words:

مدِينِينَ (called to account) is derived from دان which means, he obeyed; he was or became abased and submissive. دانه means, he made him do what he disliked; he abased or enslaved him; he ruled, governed, managed him or it; he had authority over him or it; he called him to

91. And if he be of those who are on the right hand,

وَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٩١﴾

92. Then 'Peace be on thee, *who is* from those on the right hand.'

فَسَلَّمَ لَكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٩٢﴾

93. But if he be of those who reject *the truth* and are in error,

وَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

94. Then *for him will be* an entertainment of boiling water,

فَنُزُلٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ ﴿٩٤﴾

95. And burning in Hell.

وَتَصْلِيَةٌ جَهِيمٍ ﴿٩٥﴾

96. Verily, this is the certain truth^a. 4144

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٩٦﴾

97. So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great^b. 4145

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٩٧﴾

^a13:20; 22:55; 35:32. ^bSee 56:75.

account (Lane & Aqrab).

4144. Commentary:

There are three degrees of certainty. viz. حق اليقين and عين اليقين and علم اليقين. Of these the first degree of certainty is knowledge of a thing acquired inferentially as we conclude the existence of fire from the presence of smoke in a place without witnessing the fire itself (علم اليقين). But if we see the fire itself, our knowledge of the existence of fire becomes certainty of the second degree (عين اليقين). Knowledge of a thing we witness with the eye may, however, be further improved through actual experience; for instance by thrusting our hand into the fire. This is the highest stage of certainty which in the language of the Quran is called حق اليقين. The verse means that life after death is certainty of the highest degree. The *Sūrah* had opened with the subject of the

Resurrection and life after death and has closed on the same subject. This is a special peculiarity of the Quranic style that when a certain *Sūrah* begins with the discussion of a particular subject, after dealing exhaustively with it, it ends by briefly referring to the same subject.

4145. Commentary:

The verse constitutes a suitable ending to the *Sūrah*. The main topic of the *Sūrah* was the provision which God has made in the form of food, water and fire for the sustenance of physical life. The description of these manifold and multifarious divine blessings ended with an exhortation to man to glorify the name of his Lord Who has created all these things for his use (v. 75). But life on earth is not the aim and object of man's creation. It is only a prelude to, and a preparation for, a much higher and

nobler life without end. For the achievement of the object of that life, God raised His Messengers and sent down Revelation, so that man should make preparation for the day of his death. In afterlife man shall have to

render an account of his deeds. So, for this great favour he should glorify the name of his Lord, the Great. With this exhortation and reminder the *Sūrah* comes to a close.

CHAPTER 57

AL-ḤADĪD

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This is the first of the last ten Medinite *Sūrahs* of the Quran which end with chapter 66. It seems to have been revealed after the Conquest of Mecca or the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah, as is clear from the mention of الفتح (the Victory) in v. 11 which refers to the Fall of Mecca or, according to some, more appropriately to the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah. The series of the Meccan *Sūrahs* which began with *Sūrah* As-Saba' and which, with the exception of the three intervening Medinite chapters, i.e. Muḥammad, Al-Fath and Al-Hujurat, had continued without interruption ended with the preceding chapter. This series completes the subject matter of the Meccan *Sūrahs*. With the present *Sūrah*, however, begins a new series of Medinite chapters which end with *Sūrah* At-Tahrim. The *Sūrah* takes its title from the word الحديد (the iron) occurring in v. 26.

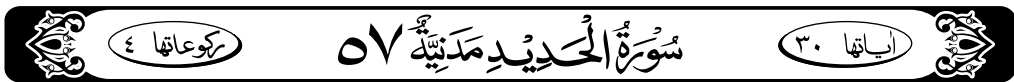
In the preceding *Sūrah* (v.79) it was stated that the Quran is كتاب مكنون (well-preserved Book), which among other things signifies that the teachings of the Quran are in perfect harmony with natural laws and with the dictates and demands of human nature, reason and common-sense. The present *Sūrah* opens with the Divine attributes: the Mighty, the Wise. And quite naturally, the Being Who is Wise and Mighty must have revealed a Book whose teachings are consistent with the laws of nature and with human reason and conscience. And, befittingly the *Sūrah* opens with the words "Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares the glory of Allah," and this is because the preceding *Sūrah* had ended on the Divine command, viz. "So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Incomparably Great." It is significant that five, out of these ten Medinite *Sūrahs*, open with the words, "Whatever is in the heavens and in the earth declares the glory of Allah, the Mighty, the Wise."

Subject Matter

In the previous seven Meccan *Sūrahs*, especially in the three immediately preceding—Al-Qamar, Ar-Raḥmān, and Al-Wāqī'ah—it was repeatedly declared, in forceful though metaphorical language, that a great reformation, a veritable resurrection, was about to be brought about by the Holy Prophet among a people who for long centuries had grovelled in dust and dirt; and who because they had no living relation with civilized society, were looked down upon as pariahs among the comity of great nations. The present *Sūrah* points out that the great day of the phenomenal progress and power of that pariah nation—the Arabs—has already dawned and that the

eventual victory of truth over falsehood is in sight. The *Sūrah* opens with a declaration of the power, might and knowledge of God, the Revealer of the Quran. "His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth (v. 2)," says the *Sūrah*, "and it is He who causes the light of truth to penetrate the darkness of falsehood and the darkness of falsehood to disappear" (v.7), hinting thereby that the hour of the Victory of Islam had approached near. But there were essential conditions to be fulfilled before that consummation could take place, i.e. there must be on the part of Muslims a firm and invincible faith in the truth of Islamic ideals and a preparedness to make necessary sacrifice of life and property for the furtherance of the cause of truth. This is how, the *Sūrah* proceeds to say, God gives life to earth after it is dead (v. 18), i.e. He raises a people morally corrupt and politically unsettled to spiritual eminence and material power and greatness. The believers, however, are warned that after they have acquired power and prosperity they should not neglect moral ideals and should not indulge in the pursuit of transitory material pleasures because that would lead them to a life of sin and vice.

The *Sūrah* continues the theme namely, that from time immemorial God's Messengers have been appearing in the world to lead men to the goal of their lives and that God has created "iron" (v. 26) which of all metals is perhaps of greater utility for mankind and which causes great violence and destruction. Next, the *Sūrah* very briefly traces back the account of Divine revelation to the time of Noah and the Prophets of Israel and closes by warning Muslims that God's pleasure is not to be sought by leading a life of renunciation or flight from the world, as Jesus's followers had mistakenly thought and practised, but by making proper use of powers and faculties bestowed by God on man, and of the things God has created for his benefit.



(AL-HADĪD)

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.^a

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Whatever is in the heavens and earth glorifies Allah;^b and He is Mighty, the Wise. 4146

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ②
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b17:45; 24:42; 61:2; 62:2; 64:2.

4146. Important Words:

سبح (glorifies) is derived from (sabaḥa). They say سبح في الماء i.e. he swam in the water. سبح في الأرض means, he went or travelled far in the land. سبح في حوائجه means, he occupied himself in the accomplishment of his needs. سبح الرجل means, the man busied himself in earning his subsistence or in his affairs. سبح (sabhun) thus would signify doing one's task or doing it with utmost effort and quickly, and سبحان الله denotes quickness in betaking oneself to God and agility in serving or obeying Him and therefore may be rendered, "I betake myself quickly to the service of God and am prompt in obeying Him." In view of the root meaning of this word, the inf. Noun تسبيح would mean, declaring God to be far removed from every imperfection, defect and impurity, or betaking oneself quickly to God's service and to be prompt in obeying Him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that everything in the universe is doing its allotted task punctually and regularly, and by making use of the attributes and powers bestowed upon it by God

is fulfilling the object of its creation in such a wonderful manner that one is irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that the Designer and Architect of the universe is indeed Mighty, and Wise, and that the whole universe collectively, and every created thing individually and in its own limited sphere, bears testimony to the undeniable fact that God's handiwork is absolutely free from flaw, defect or imperfection in all its multifarious and multitudinous aspects. This is the meaning and significance of تسبيح. In fact, the perfection of a work presupposes two things: (a) that its doer possesses all the necessary means for accomplishing it and (b) that he possesses complete and perfect knowledge about it. God is Mighty and Wise, says the verse, i.e. His handiwork being flawless demonstrates His wisdom and might. The verse may also signify that by the revelation of the Quran such a great change will come over Arabia that this land, reeking with superstition, ignorance and idol worship, will reverberate with the glorification of the Mighty and Wise Creator and Master of the universe.

3. His is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth; He gives life and He causes death,^a and He has power over all things. **4147**

4. He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden, and He knows all things full well.”**4148**

5. He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods,^b then He settled Himself on the Throne. He knows what enters the earth and what comes out of it,^c and what comes down from heaven and what goes up into it. And He is with you

لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ
يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ
وَالْبَاطِنُ ۚ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ
يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلْجُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ
مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ
فِيهَا ۚ وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ

^a3:157; 7:159; 44:9. ^b7:55; 11:8; 25:60; 32:5. ^c34:3

4147. Commentary:

This verse explains the Divine attributes "Mighty" and "Wise" mentioned in the preceding verse.

The words "He gives life and He causes death," signify that the process of construction and destruction is operating every moment in every atom in the universe.

4148. Commentary:

الاول (the First) meaning that there was nothing before God, signifies that He created everything and He is the First Cause of all things. الآخر (the Last) means that there is and there will be nothing after Him, i.e. He is the Last and Final Cause of all things or that whereas everything is subject to death and destruction, He alone

will remain after all things had ceased to exist. الظاهر (the Manifest) may signify that all things are subject to divine laws and God has power over all things and is subordinate to no one and is subject to no laws, or that He is manifest in His works, or is more manifest than anything else, or that He comprehends everything. الباطن (the Hidden) may signify that God is the Knower of all things, so that there is nothing hidden from Him, or that whereas He comprehends everything He Himself is Incomprehensible. The expression may also signify that there is nothing nearer than God or that there is no refuge besides Him.

These four Divine attributes show that God is above the limitations of space and time.

wheresoever you may be. And Allah sees all that you do.⁴¹⁴⁹

6. His is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth;^a and to Allah are all affairs referred *for final judgement*.

7. He causes the night to pass into the day and causes the day to pass into the night;^b and He knows full well all that is in the breasts.⁴¹⁵⁰

8. Believe in Allah and His Messenger, and spend *in the way of Allah* out of that to which He has made you heirs.

وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝

لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ

تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ۝

يُؤَيِّجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُؤَيِّجُ النَّهَارَ فِي

الَّيْلِ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ۝

أَمْنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَأَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ

مُسْتَخْلَفِينَ فِيهِ ۖ فَالَّذِينَ أَمْنُوا مِنْكُمْ

^a2:108; 7:159; 43:86. ^b22:62; 31:30; 35:14.

4149. Commentary:

For a detailed note on the first part of this verse see 7:55; 10:4 and 41:10-11, and for the latter part see 34:3. The six periods or stages of evolution referred to in the verse may be those of the ether, nebula, electrons, minerals, plants and animals. Very briefly, the verse may signify that after God had created the heavens and the earth in six periods or stages, He began to control and govern the universe through set laws, and that as He made provision for the physical sustenance and development of man, so did He make similar provision for his spiritual evolution. But God alone knew when a particular divine teaching was needed for a particular people; also when to take it back to heaven, i.e. to abrogate it, when it was corrupted and ceased to fulfil the

spiritual needs of the people to whom it was given. And He alone knew when to reveal a new teaching. And now that God has revealed the Quran, He will be with the Muslims wheresoever they may be because to them is entrusted the preaching of the last Divine Message.

4150. Commentary:

In the preceding verse it was pointed out that now that God has chosen the Companions of the Holy Prophet for the bestowal of His special favours and has entrusted to them the preaching of the Quranic Message, He will give them power and predominance in the world because His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. The present verse, continuing the theme, purports to say that the night of decline and degradation that had enveloped Arabia is about to pass away

And those of you who believe and spend will have a great reward.⁴¹⁵¹

9. Why is it that you believe not in Allah, while the Messenger calls you to believe in your Lord, and He has already taken a covenant from you, if indeed you are believers?⁴¹⁵²

10. He it is Who sends down clear Signs to His servant,^a that He may bring you out of every *kind of* darkness into the Light.^b And verily, Allah is Compassionate and Merciful to you.

11. And why is it that you spend not in the way of Allah, while to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth? Those of you who spent and fought before the Victory are not equal *to those who did so later*. They are greater in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards^c.

وَأَنْفَقُوا لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ^٨

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ^٩ وَالرَّسُولِ
يَدْعُوكُمْ لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ وَقَدْ أَخَذَ
مِيثَاقَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ^{١٠}

هُوَ الَّذِي يُنَزِّلُ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ
لِّيُخْرِجَكُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ^{١١}
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ^{١٢}

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ^{١٣} لَا
يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ
وَقَتْلٍ^{١٤} أُولَئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِنَ
الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ وَقَتْلُوا^{١٥} وَكُلًّا

^a22:17; 24:35; 58:6. ^b14:6; 33:44; 65:12. ^c4:96; 9:20.

and the day of its ascendance and progress is about to dawn.

4151. Commentary:

In the preceding verse Muslims were promised power, prestige and prosperity. In the present verse they are told that they will have to fulfil certain conditions to establish their title to the great favours promised to them. They must have firm faith in the truth of the Message the preaching of which is entrusted to

them and must be prepared to "spend in the way of Allah out of that to which He has made you heirs."

4152. Commentary:

The expression *مالك* besides the meaning given in the text may also signify: "There is no earthly reason that..."

"The covenant" spoken of in the verse signifies the faith-in-God implanted in the nature of man, and the longing to get near to Him.

And to all has Allah promised good. And Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴¹⁵³

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحَسَنَىٰ ۖ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
خَبِيرٌ ۝

R. 2.

12. Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan?^a So He will increase it manifold for him, and he will have a generous reward.⁴¹⁵⁴

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا
فِيُضِعَّهُ لَهُ وَلَهُ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ ۝

13. And *think of* the day when thou wilt see the believing men and the believing women, their light running before them and on their right hands,^b and it will be said to them, 'Glad tidings for you this day!—Gardens through which streams flow, wherein you will abide. That is the supreme triumph.'⁴¹⁵⁵

يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى
نُورُهُمْ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ
بُشْرَاكُمْ الْيَوْمَ جَنَّتْ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ
الْعَظِيمُ ۝

^a2:246; 64:18; 73:21. ^b66:9.

4153. Commentary:

Man will have to leave behind in this world all his material possessions which in truth belong to God.

الفتح (the Victory) may refer to the Fall of Mecca, soon after which the whole of Arabia submitted to the Holy Prophet, or it may refer to the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah which laid the foundation of the subsequent rapid spread of Islam and of the vast and very quick expansion of the political power of Muslims.

4154. Commentary:

God regards monetary sacrifices, demanded of Muslims for their own progress and advancement, as a loan lent to Him which He promises to

increase and return manifold. The sacrifices rendered by early Muslims in the cause of truth led to a comparatively much greater reward in the form of the conquest of the mightiest empires of the time.

4155. Commentary:

The words, "their light," mean the light of their faith and good actions which on the "day of distress and darkness", (i.e. for disbelievers) will lead believers to their goal. Thus their faith and good works will assume the form of light on the 'Day of Resurrection.' "Light" may also mean the light of Divine realization and the capacity to seek and achieve the pleasure of God in this very life. For

14. On the day when the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women will say to those who believe, 'Wait a while for us that we may borrow from your light,' it will be said to them, 'Go back if you can, and seek for light.' Then there, will be set up between them a wall with a door in it. The inside of it, will be *all* mercy and outside of it, in front, will be torment.⁴¹⁵⁶

15. They will call out to them, saying, 'Were we not with you?' They will answer, 'Yea, but you led your selves into temptation and you hesitated^a and doubted and your vain desires deceived

يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنْفِقُونَ وَالْمُنْفِقَاتُ
لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا انْظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِنْ
نُورِكُمْ قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا وَرَاءَكُمْ
فَاتِّمِسُوا نُورًا ۖ فَضَرْبَ بَيْنَهُمُ
بُيُوتُهُ بَابٌ ۖ بَاطِنُهُ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ
وَوَظَاهِرُهُ مِنْ قِبَلِهِ الْعَذَابُ ﴿١٥﴾

يَنَادُونَهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ
وَلَكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ
وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْأَمَانِيُّ حَتَّىٰ جَاءَ

^a4:142; 9:98.

"divine light" see 6:123.

4156. Important Words:

It is characteristic of the Hypocrites that in time of trials and tribulations they seek to dissociate themselves from believers but in the hour of success and victory they loudly profess faith and ask for their share in the benefits of victory.

"Light", as mentioned in the preceding verse, is bestowed upon believers in consequence of their good works in this life also, and the Hypocrites are told in the present verse that the only way they could have received light in the Hereafter was by good actions in the present life; the expression *وراءكم* signifying

the present life.

The last part of the verse may also mean that God's mercy and grace would accompany the believers wherever they go and Divine punishment would dog the footsteps of disbelievers and, try as they might, they will find no refuge from it.

"A wall" referred to in the verse might signify the wall of Islam or of the Quran. The disbelievers remained outside this wall and so were deprived of Divine mercy which was granted to believers; and were seized with punishment in this life. Their having remained outside the fold of Islam will take the form of a wall in the Hereafter.

you till the decree of Allah came to pass. And the Deceiver deceived you in respect of Allah.⁴¹⁵⁷

16. 'So this day no ransom shall be accepted from you, nor from those who disbelieved.^a Your final abode is the Fire; that is your friend; and a very evil destination it is.'⁴¹⁵⁸

17. Has not the time arrived for those who believe that their hearts should feel humbled at the remembrance of Allah and at the truth which has come down to them, and that they should not become like those who were given the Book before them, but because the period of the descent of Allah's grace upon them was prolonged for them,^b their hearts became hardened,^c and many of them are wicked?⁴¹⁵⁹

أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَغَرَّرَكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ^⑤

قَالِيَوْمَ لَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْكُمْ فِدْيَةٌ وَلَا
مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا^ط مَا أُولَئِكَ النَّارُ^ط
هِيَ مَوْلَاكُمْ^ط وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ^⑥

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ
قُلُوبُهُمْ لِدِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ^ل
وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ
قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ
قُلُوبُهُمْ^ط وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَسِقُونَ^⑦

^a2:49. ^b21:45. ^c2:75; 6:44.

4157. Commentary:

أَمْرُ اللَّهِ (decree of Allah) means the decree of Allah that Divine punishment will overtake the hypocrites. The reference may be to the punishment of the Jewish tribes of Medina for their repeated defection and treachery.

4158. Commentary:

The words "that is your friend" seem to have been used ironically. Or the words may mean that only the fire

of Hell will purify them of the impurities and dross of sins committed by disbelievers in this life and will make them fit for spiritual progress and thus will be a "friend" to them.

4159. Commentary:

The verse seems to refer to the latter-day Muslims when as a result of neglecting the teachings of Islam they will have become spiritually corrupt, morally depraved and politically impotent. The verse means

18. Know that Allah is *now* quickening the earth after its death.^a We have made the Signs manifest to you, that you may understand. **4160**

إَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ
مَوْتِهَا قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

19. *As to* the men who give alms, and the women who give alms, and those who lend to Allah a goodly loan^b—it will be increased manifold for them, and theirs will be a noble reward—**4161**

إِنَّ الْمَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمَصَدِّقَاتِ وَأَقْرَضُوا
اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُضْعَفُ لَهُمْ وَلَهُمْ
أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿١٩﴾

20. And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers *and* they are the Truthful and the Witnesses in the sight of their Lord, they will have their reward

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الصَّادِقُونَ ۖ وَالشَّهَدَاءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ
لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ

^a22:7; 35:10. ^b2:246; 30:40.

to bring home to them the realization of their all-round degradation and makes to them a pathetic appeal. "Has not the time arrived yet," it seems to say to them, "now that they have sunk to the lowest depths of degradation, they should turn to God and act upon the teachings of their religion which once raised them to the highest peaks of greatness, grandeur and glory."

4160. Commentary:

In the preceding verse Muslims were told that a time would come when, as the result of ignoring and neglecting the teachings of their religion, their hearts would become hardened and they would turn away from God and incur His displeasure

and consequently would become degraded and disgraced. But God would not leave them in the lurch. In conformity with His time-honoured Law, viz. that when the earth becomes dry, He sends down rain from the heavens and gives a new life to it. He will raise among them a great Divine Reformer and through him will bring about the renaissance of Islam, and Muslims will again see better days.

4161. Commentary:

After the appearance of a great Divine Reformer among them as promised in the preceding verse, the Muslims will be called upon to make great sacrifices, especially in money

and their light. But *as for* those ^awho disbelieve and reject Our Signs, these are the inmates of Hell.⁴¹⁶²

R. 3.

21. ^bKnow that the life of this world is only a sport and a pastime, and an adornment, and *a source of* boasting among yourselves, and *of rivalry* in multiplying riches and children. *This life is* like the rain, the vegetation produced whereby rejoices the tillers. Then it dries up and thou seest it turn yellow; ^cthen it becomes broken pieces *of straw*. And in the Hereafter there is severe punishment, and *also* forgiveness from Allah. and *His* pleasure. And the life of this world is nothing but *temporary* enjoyment of deceitful things.⁴¹⁶³

كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ۝٩٨

إِعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُوَ
وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي
الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ ۖ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ
أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ
فَتَرِبَهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا ۖ
وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ۚ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ ۖ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا
إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ۝٩٩

^a2:40; 7:37; 22:58; 30:17; 64: 11; 78:29. ^b6:33; 29:65; 47:37. ^c56:66.

and property, as at that time the teachings of Islam will need to be preached and propagated to the ends of the earth and financial help will be very much in demand.

4162. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that if Muslims believed in the great Divine Reformer, they will attain to those spiritual heights which the Truthful (الصادقون) and the Martyrs (الشهداء) attained.

4163. Important Words:

كافر (tillers) is the plural of كافر which is act. part. from كفر. They say كَفَرَ الشَّيْءُ أو كَفَرَهُ (kaffara), i.e. he concealed, hid or covered the thing. كَفَرَ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ أو بِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ means, he denied or did not acknowledge the favour of God, he denied and concealed it. The husbandman is called كافر because he concealed the seed under earth, and a disbeliever is so called because he conceals and denies the favour of God (Lane & Aqrab).

22. "Vie with one another in seeking forgiveness from your Lord and for a Garden the value whereof is equal to the value of the heaven and the earth; it has been prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messenger. That is Allah's grace; He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases, and Allah is the Lord of immense grace.⁴¹⁶⁴

سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ
عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ
أَعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٢﴾

^a3:134; 35:33.

Commentary:

Life spent in forgetfulness of God and disregard of its higher values is, as described in the verse under comment, but a sport and a pastime, otherwise man's life on earth is a most serious fact. It has a great mission and a noble object to fulfil. The verse implies that at the time when the great Promised Reformer to whom reference is impliedly made in the preceding verse would make his appearance, men would neglect the grim and noble purpose of their lives and would give themselves up, body and soul, to the pursuit of petty and paltry pleasures of life and there would be a mad craze and unhealthy competition among them, and vying with one another, for amassing wealth and material resources. But the end of all this competition and rivalry, says the verse, would be like the end of a blooming and blossoming crop over which a scorching wind has blown turning it into broken pieces of straw.

4164. Important Words:

عرض (value) is derived from عرض (‘arada). عرض الشيء لفلان means, he showed, manifested, presented the thing to such a one means, breadth, width; vastness; latitude. ذهب طولاً و عرضاً means, he went lengthwise and breadthwise. The word also means, worldly goods; price; gain; a compensation; a substitute; any goods or commodities except gold or silver; etc. (Lane).

Commentary:

In view of different meanings of عرض given under Important Words the verse would mean that the heavens and the earth—the whole universe—would be given to believers as a reward for the good works they had done in this life, which signifies that the reward of the righteous in the afterlife would be beyond measure or count. Or the Paradise comprising both the heavens and the earth may signify that the believers will live in Paradise both in this life and in the

23. There befalls not any calamity either in the earth or in your *own* persons, but it is *recorded* in a Book before We bring it into being—surely, that is easy for Allah—**4165**

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ
أَنْ تُبْرَاهَا ۚ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. "That you may not grieve over what is lost to you nor exult because of that which He has given to you. And Allah loves not any self-conceited boaster,

لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ
وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. ^bSuch as are niggardly and *also* enjoin upon men to be niggardly. And whoso turns his back, then surely Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.

الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ
بِالْبُخْلِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ
الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٢٥﴾

^a3:154. ^b4:38.

Hereafter. Moreover, the fact that Paradise as conceived by the Quran is as extensive as both the heavens and the earth—the whole space—shows that it comprises Hell also. This means that Paradise and Hell are not two distinct and separate places but two conditions or states of mind. A well-known saying of the Holy Prophet gives an insight into the Quranic conception of Paradise and Hell. Once on being asked by some of his Companions: "If Paradise comprises in its vastness heavens and earth, where is Hell," the Holy Prophet is reported to have replied, أين آين الليل اذا جاء النهار i.e. where is the night when the day comes (Ibn Kathir). Besides, the substitution of the words مغفرة من ربكم وجنة

comment for مغفرة من الله ورضوان in the preceding verse shows that Paradise (جنة) in fact means the pleasure of God (رضوان). What a beautiful conception of Paradise!

4165. Commentary:

كتاب (Book) may signify divine law or knowledge. It may also signify the Quran. According to the first meaning, the verse would signify that everything is subject to a certain law of nature. According to the second it may mean that the causes and cures of misery befalling nations and individuals have been mentioned in the Quran, the words في الارض signifying people in general, and في أنفسكم meaning the Muslims as a whole or every individual.

26. Verily, We sent Our Messengers with manifest Signs^a and sent down with them the Book and the Balance^b that people may act with justice; and We sent down iron, wherein is *material* for violent warfare and *many* benefits for mankind, and that Allah may distinguish those who help *Him* and His Messengers without having seen Him. Surely, Allah is Powerful, Mighty.⁴¹⁶⁶

R. 4.

27. And We did send Noah and Abraham, and We placed among their seed prophethood and the Book.^c So some of them

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا
مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ
بِالْقِسْطِ^ج وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ
شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ
مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ^ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ
قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ^{ع ٢٦}

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَجَعَلْنَا
فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ فَمِنْهُمْ

^a7:102; 14:10; 35:26. ^b42:18; 55:8. ^c29:28; 5:47.

4166. Commentary:

الكتاب signifies the eternal divine laws. الميزان has different senses with different scholars. Some of these are: (a) Principles of equity which people are enjoined to observe in their dealings with others. (b) Standards by which human actions are measured, weighed, appraised and judged. (c) Balance which pervades the whole universe maintaining just equilibrium between all things. (d) Practice or example of the Holy Prophet and right use of the Book of God. (e) The capacity for leadership by means of which the Holy Prophet, in conformity with the Book of Allah, established a system of justice between the State, the society and the

individual. (f) Following the golden means and avoiding extremes in the discharge of one's obligations towards God and men. (g) Reasons and arguments based on observation and experience. See also 42:18 and 55:10.

الحديد (iron) is the metal which has perhaps played the greatest and most useful part in the growth and development of human civilization. It may also signify the power to compel obedience to the laws upon which the whole existence of human society depends. Thus the verse means that God has sent down three things, viz. (a) divine laws; (b) the system which maintains just equilibrium in human social relations and (c) the power to compel obedience to divine laws.

followed the guidance, but many of them were rebellious.⁴¹⁶⁷

28. Then We ^acaused Our Messengers to follow in their footsteps; and We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow *them*, and we gave him the Gospel, ^bAnd We created in the hearts of those who accepted him compassion and mercy. But monasticism which they invented for themselves—We did not prescribe it for them—for the seeking of Allah's pleasure; but they did not observe it with due observance. Yet We gave those of them who believed their *due* reward, but many of them are rebellious.⁴¹⁶⁸

مُهْتَدٍ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَسِقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

ثُمَّ قَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِرُسُلِنَا
وَقَفَّيْنَا بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَآتَيْنَاهُ
الْإِنْجِيلَ ۖ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ
اتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۗ وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً
ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا
ابْتِغَاءَ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ
رِعَايَتِهَا ۖ فَآتَيْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْهُمْ
أَجْرَهُمْ ۚ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَسِقُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

^a2:88; 5:47. ^b5:83.

4167. Commentary:

In the preceding verse it was mentioned that in order to make men lead useful and righteous lives and realize the object for which God has brought this universe into existence, He sent His Messengers and revealed to them guidance from Himself and supported the claims of Divine Messengers with clear and sound arguments; and He also sent down iron which is of immense value and utility to mankind. The present verse gives the names of some of those Divine Messengers. Noah is probably the first law-bearing Prophet and Abraham the progenitor of the three

great peoples—Jews, Christians and Muslims. After these two Prophets, the system of prophethood continued till it found its final exponent in the Mosaic Dispensation in the person of Jesus to whom the next verse makes a pointed reference.

4168. Commentary:

The verse may mean that the followers of Jesus invented monasticism in order to seek Allah's pleasure but Allah had not prescribed it for them; or they invented monasticism which God had not prescribed for them—He had only prescribed for them the seeking of His pleasure.

29. O ye who believe! fear Allah and believe in His Messenger; He will give you a double portion of His mercy, and will provide for you a light wherein you will walk, and will grant you forgiveness—and verily Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful—4169

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا
بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ
وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

In v. 26, it was stated that God had sent down الميزان (Balance) in order that people may act with equity and justice, i.e. by avoiding extremes they should adopt the golden mean or the middle course in all their affairs and actions because that was the best and the safest course. In the present verse the example of a people—the Christians—has been cited to show that the adoption of an extreme course by them, with howsoever good intentions, led them away from the goal they had sought to attain. They invented the institution of monkery in order, as they thought, to seek the pleasure of God, and in conformity with, according to them, Jesus's own teaching and practice. The adage that the road to Heaven is paved with good intentions was never better illustrated than in the case of Christians for whom monkery proved a source of many evils. They started with monasticism and ended with giving themselves up to the worship of Mammon. By implication the Muslims were told that because a great Prophet had been raised for them, by following whom they would be given great worldly power and wealth, they should not go to the other extreme and give themselves up

to the pursuit of material gains and physical pleasures. While monasticism has been decried and deplored as repugnant to human nature, the Holy Prophet also is reported to have said: لا رهبانية في الإسلام i.e. there is no monasticism in Islam (Ibn Athīr). Islam is not a religion for dreamers and visionaries who live in a world of their own conception, entirely divorced from the hard realities of life, but it is a practical system which gives effective and full guidance in mundane as well as spiritual affairs. It has not left any aspect of crowded human life for which it has not laid down practical guidance. There is no place in Islam for such an impracticable teaching as "take no thought for the morrow" (Matt. 6:34). It emphatically enjoins a Muslim "to look to what he sends forth for the morrow" (59:19). According to Islam a true Muslim is one who discharges fully and completely the obligations he owes to his fellow beings (حقوق العباد) as he discharges those he owes to his Creator (حقوق الله).

4169. Commentary:

As in the preceding verse the Christians were admonished for

30. That the People of the Book may not think that they (the Muslims) have no power to attain aught of the grace of Allah; ^awhereas grace is *entirely* in the hands of Allah. ^bHe gives it to whomsoever He pleases. And Allah is the Master of immense grace. **4170**

لَّيْسَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّ الْقُدْرَةَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِّنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَّشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝

^a2:106. ^b2:106; 3:74.

regarding a life of renunciation and flight from the world as an ideal, the Muslims in the present verse are told to devote as much care and attention to their mundane as to their spiritual affairs and to discharge the obligations they owe to their Creator and Lord with as much devotion as their obligations to their fellow beings, and that if they did so they would be granted the benefits and blessings of this life as well as those of the Hereafter. Elsewhere in the Quran, Muslims have been enjoined

constantly to pray: "Our Lord, grant us good in this world as well as good in the world to come" (2:202).

4170. Commentary:

In the preceding verse the Muslims were promised both spiritual and material benefits and blessings in order to let People of the Book disabuse their minds of the false notion that Divine grace was their monopoly and also to remind them that now God had transferred it to another people—the followers of Islam.

CHAPTER 58

AL-MUJĀDALAH

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūrah* takes its title from the word *مجادل* occurring in its opening verse. It is the second of the last seven Medinite chapters of the Quran and appears to have been revealed sometime before *Sūrah* Al-Aḥzāb (chapter 33), in which only a cursory reference was made to the evil custom of *Ẓihār*, i.e. calling one's wife one's "mother." This subject has been dealt with in some detail in the present *Sūrah*. Khaulah, wife of Aus bin Ṣāmit, complained to the Holy Prophet that her husband had called her "mother," which rendered her a "suspended" woman neither divorced nor enjoying the status of a wife. The Holy Prophet pleaded his inability to do anything to help her in the absence of a revealed ordinance. This somewhat detailed reference to *Ẓihār* in this *Sūrah* shows that it was revealed before *Sūrah* Al-Aḥzāb. But as *Sūrah* Al-Aḥzāb was revealed between 5th and 7th year of the Hijrah, the present *Sūrah* therefore must have been revealed earlier, very likely between the 3rd and the 4th year.

Moreover, in the immediately preceding *Sūrah*—Al-Ḥadīd—the "People of the Book" were sternly told that Divine grace was not their monopoly and since they had repeatedly defied and had opposed and persecuted God's Messengers, God's favour would be transferred for all time to come to the House of Ishmael, and so Muslims are warned in the *Sūrah* under comment that their material prosperity would excite the enmity of their external and internal foes. They should, therefore, be on their guard against their machinations. And, it is an invariable practice of the Quran that whenever it deals with the enemies of Islam, it also makes a pointed reference to some social evil which may be regarded as the enemy of Islamic social system. This method was adopted in *Sūrah* Nūr and Aḥzāb and it has been adopted in the present *Sūrah* as well.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with a sharp disapproval of the evil custom of *Ẓihār* and by citing the case of Khaulah lays down the ordinance that if anyone calls his wife "mother" he has to atone for this heinous moral lapse by either freeing a slave, if he has one, or by fasting for two successive months, or by feeding sixty needy persons. The punishment is commensurate with the offence as the evil practice is tantamount to "opposing God and His Messenger". After dealing a death blow to the custom of *Ẓihār*, the *Sūrah* proceeds to deal with the plots and conspiracies of the internal enemies of

Islam and condemns the formation of secret societies and holding secret conferences to injure the cause of truth. Then with befitting relevance the *Sūrah* lays down some rules of conduct about social gatherings. Towards its close, the *Sūrah* gives a warning to the enemies of truth that by their opposition they are incurring God's wrath and that they shall not be able to arrest or impede the progress of Islam because it is a Divine decree that it shall prevail. The warning to disbelievers that their opposition to truth will not go unpunished is followed by an equally strong warning to believers, that under no circumstances should they make friends with the enemies of Islam, however nearly related the latter might be to them, as by opposing the Faith they have waged a veritable war against God, and friendship with God's enemies is inconsistent with true Faith.



رُكُوعَاتُهَا ٣

سُورَةُ الْمُجَادَلَةِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ٥٨

آيَاتُهَا ٢٣



(AL-MUJĀDALAH)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.⁴¹⁷¹

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Allah has indeed heard the speech of her who pleads with thee concerning her husband, and complains unto Allah. And Allah has heard your dialogue. Verily, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.⁴¹⁷²

قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَكُمَا ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ①

3. ^bThose among you who seek to put away their wives by calling them mothers—they do not thereby become their mothers; their mothers are only those who gave them birth; and they certainly utter words that are manifestly evil and untrue;

الَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ نِسَائِهِمْ مَا هُنَّ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ ۖ إِنَّ أُمَّهَاتَهُمْ إِلَّا الْإِصْنَاعُ وَلَدْنَهُمْ ۖ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنْكَرًا مِّنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا ۖ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ

^aSee 1:1. ^b33:5

4171. Commentary:

See 1:1.

4172. Commentary:

The reference in the verse seems to be to Khaulah, wife of Aus bin Šāmit and daughter of Tha'labah. She had become separated from her husband because the latter had called her "mother," the exact words used by him being, "thou art to me as the back of my mother." According to an old Arab custom all conjugal relations ceased between a man and his wife when he used these words about her. The unfortunate woman could neither

demand divorce in order to contract a second marriage, nor could she enjoy conjugal rights. She remained uncared for. Khaulah came to the Holy Prophet and complained to him of the awkward situation in which she was placed, and sought his advice and help in the matter. The Holy Prophet pleaded his inability to do anything for her, as it was his wont not to give a decision in matters of this nature, unless he was guided by revelation. The revelation came, and the custom of *Zihār* was declared unlawful.

Incidentally, the verse shows that

but surely Allah is the Effacer of sins, Most Forgiving.⁴¹⁷³

4. *As to* those who call their wives mothers, and then would go back on what they have said, *the penalty for it* is the freeing of a slave before they touch each other. This is what you are admonished with. And Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴¹⁷⁴

5. But whoso does not find a slave, he must fast for two successive months, before they touch each other. And whoso is not able to do so, must feed sixty poor people. This is so prescribed, that you may truly believe in Allah and His Messenger. And these are the limits prescribed by Allah; and

God hears the prayers and complaints of even the weakest of His servants.

4173. Commentary:

Zihār or calling ones wife "mother" has been declared here a heinous sin. For a somewhat detailed note see 33:5.

The words لعفو غفور mean that God in His great mercy has made allowance for man's weakness and that He is always ready to forgive his lapses, provided he comes to God with a penitent heart and makes amends.

The verse has redeemed a right which through a cruel custom was denied to women and thus has raised

لَعَفُوْ غُفُوْرٌ ۝۲

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُظْهِرُوْنَ مِنْ نِّسَابِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُوْدُوْنَ لِمَا قَالُوْا فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّتِمَّاسَا۟ ذٰلِكُمْ تُوَعُّظُوْنَ بِهٖ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ۝۴

فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّتِمَّاسَا۟ فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَاِطْعَامُ سِتِّيْنَ مِسْكِيْنًا ۚ ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ لَّمْ يَلِدْ وَلِلْكَافِرِيْنَ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ۝۵

them to the status to which they were entitled.

4174. Commentary:

The words "they go back on what they have said," may signify that after calling their wives "mothers" they seek to re-establish conjugal relations with them. Or the words may mean that after having once called their wives "mothers" they repeat what they have said. According to this meaning, it is deliberate repetition of the obnoxious words and not their casual or inadvertent utterance that renders the utterer liable to the punishment prescribed in this and the following verse.

for the disbelievers is a painful punishment.⁴¹⁷⁵

6. "Those who oppose Allah and His Messenger will surely be abased even as those before them were abased; and We have already sent down clear Signs.^b And the disbelievers will have a humiliating punishment."⁴¹⁷⁶

7. On the day when Allah will raise them all together, He will inform them of what they did. Allah has kept account of it, while they forgot it. And Allah is Witness over all things.

R. 2.

8. Dost thou not see that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth?

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادِّثُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ كُتِبُوا
كَمَا كُتِبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
وَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ
عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ^ج

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا
عَمِلُوا أَحْصَاهُ اللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ^ح

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا
فِي الْأَرْضِ^ط مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ نَجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ

^a9:63. ^b22:17; 24:35; 57:10.

4175. Commentary:

The drastic punishment mentioned in these verses indicates the extreme seriousness of the crime of calling one's wife "mother." The relationship with "mother" is too sacred to be trifled with. The expression *لَتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ* means, you may learn to obey the commandments of Allah and his Messenger.

4176. Important Words:

كُتِبُوا (will be abased). *كُتِبَ* means, he threw him down prostrate. *كُتِبَ اللَّهُ الْكَافِرَ* means, God prostrated the disbeliever, and deprived him of what he desired, or disappointed him, or caused him to fail in attaining his

desire; he routed him or put him to flight; he turned him away or averted him; he abused; debased him, rendered him vile, despicable or ignominious. (Aqrab)

Commentary:

Calling one's wife "mother" is tantamount to opposing God—so hideous is the offence. Befittingly the subject of opposition to truth by the Jews and hypocrites is introduced in this verse.

The words "and We have sent clear signs," show that Divine punishment overtakes the sinners after their sins have been fully established and their guilt brought home to them.

There is no secret counsel of three, but He is their fourth, nor of five, but He is their sixth, nor of less than that, nor of more, but He is with them wheresoever they may be. Then on the Day of Resurrection He will inform them of what they did. Surely, Allah knows all things well.⁴¹⁷⁷

9. Hast thou not seen those who were forbidden *to hold* secret counsels and again return to what they were forbidden, and confer in secret for sin and transgression and disobedience to the Messenger? And when they come to thee, they greet thee with *a greeting with which* Allah has not greeted thee;^a but among themselves they say, ‘Why does not Allah punish us for what we say?’ Sufficient for them is Hell, wherein they will

إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةَ إِلَّا هُوَ
سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَدْنَى مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ
إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ؕ
ثُمَّ يَنْبِئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

الْمُتَرِّ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نُهُوا عَنِ النَّجْوَى
ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَيَتَنَجَّوْنَ
بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعْصِيَتِ
الرَّسُولِ ۚ وَإِذَا جَاءُوكَ حَيَّوْكَ بِمَا
لَمْ يُحَيِّكَ بِهِ اللَّهُ ۚ وَيَقُولُونَ فِي
أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَوْلَا يُعَذِّبُنَا اللَّهُ بِمَا نَقُولُ
حَسْبُكُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ يَصْلَوْنَهَا ؕ فَبِئْسَ
الْمَصِيرُ ۝

^a2:105; 4:47.

4177. Commentary:

The subject which was only indirectly introduced in v. 6 has been elaborated in this and the next few verses. The present verse refers to the secret plots and conspiracies against Islam of the Jews and hypocrites of Medina. It condemns this evil practice and warns them that their plots are not hidden from God. He has sent the Holy Prophet and He is

his Guardian and Protector, and their conspiracies would do him no harm. They are further warned that they would be punished for their wicked designs. The expulsion of the three Jewish tribes from Medina was the result of their repeated acts of defection and infidelity and of their secret plots against Islam and against the life of the Holy Prophet.

burn; and a most evil destination it is!⁴¹⁷⁸

10. O ye who believe! when you confer together in secret, confer not for *the commission of sin and transgression and disobedience to the Messenger*, but confer for *the attainment of virtue and righteousness*, and fear Allah unto Whom you shall all be gathered.⁴¹⁷⁹

11. *Holding of secret counsels for evil purposes is only of Satan, that he may cause grief to those who believe; but it cannot harm them in the least, except by Allah's leave. And in Allah should the believers put their trust.*⁴¹⁸⁰

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَجَاجَيْتُمْ فَلَا
تَتَنَاجَوْا بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعْصِيَتِ
الرَّسُولِ وَتَنَاجَوْا بِالْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ^٥

إِنَّمَا التَّجْوِي مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ لِيَحْزَنَ الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا وَلَيْسَ بِضَارٍّ لَهُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ
اللَّهِ^٦ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ^٧

4178. Commentary:

The words, "they greet thee with which Allah has not greeted thee," may either mean that they go beyond proper limits in hypocritically praising thee, or that they invoke death and destruction upon thee. The words seem to refer to the evil practice of some of the Jews of Medina that when they came to see the Holy Prophet they, with a little twist of the tongue, would invoke curses upon him by saying السام عليك i.e. death to thee; instead of saluting him with the usual السلام عليك i.e. peace be upon thee (Bukhārī). See also 2:105.

4179. Commentary:

In this and the preceding two verses secret societies such as Freemason Lodges, etc. have been condemned, but the condemnation is not unreserved or unqualified. There may be secret conferences held for good purposes. It is the object or motive of a particular conference that determines its nature. In the present verse the believers have been allowed to hold secret conferences only to promote good and righteous causes.

4180. Commentary:

The disbelievers are warned that their secret societies and assemblies would not in any way harm the cause of truth, try as they might.

12. O ye who believe! when it is said to you, 'Make room!' in *your* assemblies, then do make room; Allah will make ample room for you. And when it is said, 'Rise up!' then rise up;^a Allah will raise those who believe from among you, and those to whom knowledge is given, to degrees of *rank*. And Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴¹⁸¹

13. O ye who believe! when you consult the Messenger in private, give alms before your consultation. That is better for you and purer. But if you find not *anything to give*, then Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.⁴¹⁸²

14. Are you afraid of giving alms before your consultation? So, when you do not do so and Allah has been merciful to you, then observe Prayer and pay the

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا
فِي الْمَجْلِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ^ج
وَإِذَا قِيلَ انشُرُوا فَانْشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ
دَرَجَاتٍ^ط وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ^{١١}

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ
فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ^ط
ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَظْهَرُ^ط فَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدُوا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ^{١٢}

ءَا سَفَقْتُمْ أَنْ تُقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ
نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَاتٍ^ط فَإِذَا لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا
وَتَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ

^a4:159; 7:177.

4181. Commentary:

As in the preceding verses the subject of holding an assembly was dealt with, it was in the fitness of things that the ethics and etiquette of an assemblage should also be pointed out and this has been done in the present verse.

The commandment contained in the verse is of a general nature but it may also have special application for a

particular assembly in which the Holy Prophet was present.

4182. Commentary:

The believers have been enjoined, in this verse, to have due regard for the precious time of the Holy Prophet and as a compensation for taking his time to spend some money in charity before going to him for consultation.

Zakāh and obey Allah and His Messenger. And Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴¹⁸³

وَأَتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

R. 3.

15. Hast thou not seen those who take for friends a people with whom Allah is wroth?^a They are neither of you nor of them, and they swear to falsehood knowingly.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ مَا هُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ ۚ
وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى الْكَذِبِ وَهُمْ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16. Allah has prepared for them a severe punishment. Evil indeed is that which they used to do.⁴¹⁸⁴

أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ
مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17. They have made their oaths a shield *for their falsehoods*, and *thereby* they seek to turn *men* away from the path of Allah; for them, therefore, will be an humiliating punishment.⁴¹⁸⁵

اتَّخَذُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا عَنْ
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿١٧﴾

^a60:14.

4183. Commentary:

The verse shows that the commandment about the giving of alms before seeking the Holy Prophet's consultation is not obligatory but optional, though its observance is preferable. The verse further signifies that the apprehension of the Companions of the Holy Prophet was whether they had given enough in alms to have complied with God's commandment.

4184. Commentary:

The words "with whom Allah is wroth" refer particularly to the Jews and hypocrites of Medina but they also possess a general application.

4185. Commentary:

The verse means that the hypocrites protest loudly the sincerity of their faith by swearing, and seek to take shelter behind their false oaths.

18. "Neither their wealth nor their children will avail them aught against Allah. They are the inmates of the Fire wherein they will abide.

لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا
أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ
النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

19. On the day when Allah will raise them all together, they will swear to Him even as they swear to you, and they will think that they have something to stand upon. Now, surely it is they who are the liars.⁴¹⁸⁶

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُ
كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ
عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ ۖ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20. Satan has gained mastery over them, and has made them forget the remembrance of Allah. They are Satan's party. Now surely, it is Satan's party that are the losers.

إِسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَأَنسَاهُمْ ذِكْرَ
اللَّهِ ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ الشَّيْطَانِ ۖ أَلَا إِنَّ
حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. ^bCertainly those who oppose Allah and His Messenger will be among the lowest.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادِّثُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
أُولَٰئِكَ فِي الْأَذَلِّينَ ﴿٢١﴾

22. Allah has decreed: 'Most surely I will prevail, I and My Messengers^c.' Verily, Allah is Powerful, Mighty.⁴¹⁸⁷

كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَا غَلِبَنَّا أَنَا وَرُسُلِي ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

^a3:11; 92:12; 111:3. ^b9:63. ^c5:57; 10:104; 30:48; 37:172-173; 40:52.

4186. Important Words:

The verse shows that when a person becomes a habitual or hardened liar, he regards his falsehood as truth. The hypocrites will protest their innocence even before God on the Day of Reckoning.

4187. Commentary:

It is writ large on the face of history that truth has always prevailed against falsehood in the long run. The verse speaks of the invincible faith and conviction which is implanted in the minds of believers about the eventual triumph of their cause.

23. "Thou wilt not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they be their fathers, or their sons or their brethren, or their kindred. These are they in whose hearts Allah has inscribed *true* faith and whom He has strengthened with inspiration from Himself. And He will make them enter Gardens through which streams flow. Therein will they abide.

^bAllah is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him. They are Allah's party. Hearken! it is Allah's party who will be successful.

4188

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ
إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ ^ط أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ
فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ
مِّنْهُ ^ط وَيَدْخُلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ^ط رَضِيَ اللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ^ط أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ ^ط
أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

^a3:29; 4:145; 9:23. ^b5:120; 9:100; 98:9.

4188. Commentary:

Obviously, there could be no true or sincere friendship or relationship of love between the Faithful and the disbelievers. The ideals, principles, and religious beliefs of the two being poles apart and the community of interest which is the *sine qua non* of intimate relationship being non-existent, the verse requires believers not to have intimate, loving and affectionate friendship with disbelievers. The bond of belief

transcends all other bonds even the close ties of blood. The verse seems to have a general application. But it applies specially to disbelievers who are at war with Muslims. See also 60:10. The word, "Allah is well-pleased with them" constitute a Divine certificate of honour that is bestowed upon the Faithful who prefer God and His Messengers to all worldly connections, even very near blood relationships.

CHAPTER 59

AL-ḤASHR

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūrah* is decidedly a Medinite revelation. It is the third of the seven last Medinite *Sūrahs* of the Quran. It deals with the banishment from Medina of the Jewish tribe of Banū Naḍīr, which took place a few months after the Battle of Uḥud, in the fourth year of the Hijrah. The preceding *Sūrah* had dealt with the secret plots and machinations against Islam of the Jews of Medina. The present *Sūrah* deals with their punishment, particularly with the banishment from Medina of the Banū Naḍīr, one of the three Jewish tribes—Banū Qainuqā‘, Banū Naḍīr and Banū Quraizah.

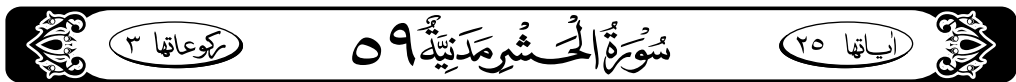
Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with the glorification of the Mighty and Wise God, signifying that the time has arrived when the great might and wisdom of God would be manifested and that whatever form the manifestation will take, it would demonstrate these two Divine attributes. The *Sūrah* then proceeds to deal with the expulsion from Medina of the Jewish tribe of Banū Naḍīr by the Holy Prophet which was an act of great wisdom and political foresight on his part, because if the Jews had been allowed to remain in Medina they would have proved, on account of their conspiracies and secret plots, a source of constant danger to Islam. In view of their evil designs and machinations, their conspiracies and secret plots, their repeated acts of treachery and infidelity and the breach of their plighted word every now and then, the punishment of exile was extremely light. What rendered the punishment much lighter and lenient was the fact that they were allowed to take with them whatever they could.

Next, the *Sūrah* deals with the hypocrites of Medina who were neither true to Muslims nor to Jews. A hypocrite is essentially a coward, and a coward person is never sincere or honest to anyone. The hypocrites of Medina proved dishonest even to the Jews in the hour of peril. The *Sūrah* opens with Divine glorification and ends with an exhortation to Muslims to sing the praises of the Beneficent and Merciful Lord, Who had nipped the wicked designs of their enemies in the bud and had opened out endless vistas of progress and prosperity for them.

It is significant that the *Sūrah* opens with the glorification of the Mighty and Wise God and ends with the prominent mention of these two Divine attributes. This signifies that the subject matter of the *Sūrah* deals with

incidents which shed a flood of light on the mightiness and wisdom of God. The *Sūrah* has close resemblance with *Sūrah* Al-Anfāl, in that besides the similarity of the subject matter of these two *Sūrahs*, the Divine attributes, the Mighty, and the Severe in retribution, have been repeatedly mentioned in the latter *Sūrah*.



(AL-HASHR)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bAll that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorifies Allah; and He is the Mighty, the Wise. **4189**

سَبِّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ② وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ③

3. He it is Who turned out the disbelievers among the People of the Book from their homes at *the time of* the first banishment. You did not think that they would go forth, and they thought that their fortresses would defend them against Allah. But Allah came upon them^c whence they did not expect, and cast terror into their hearts,^d so that they destroyed their houses with their own hands and the hands of the believers. So take a lesson, O ye who have eyes! **4190**

هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِأَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ ④ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا وَظَنُّوا أَنْهُمْ مَانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَأَتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا ⑤ وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ⑥ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ ⑦

^aSee 1:1. ^b17:45; 24:42; 61:2; 62:2; 64:2. ^c16:27; 39:26. ^d3:152; 8:13.

4189. Commentary:

For note on **سَبِّحَ** see 57:2. But whereas **تَسْبِيح** (glorifying) is used with regard to God's attributes, **تَقْدِيس** (extolling His holiness) is used concerning His actions.

4190. Commentary:

There lived at Medina three Jewish tribes—Banū Qainuqā', Banū Naḍir

and Banū Quraizah. The present verse refers to the banishment from Medina of the Banū Naḍir. This tribe like Banū Qainuqā' before them, had acted treacherously towards Muslims on several occasions. They had hatched plots and had entered into secret alliances against them, with their enemies. They had repeatedly broken their plighted word and had

repudiated the solemn agreement that they would remain neutral between the Holy Prophet and his enemies, and even had conspired to take his life. Their leader Ka'b bin Ashraf had gone to Mecca to enlist the help of the Quraish and of other pagan tribes around Mecca in order to drive out the Muslims from Medina. After the temporary reverse suffered by Muslims at Uhud, their machinations and defiance of the Prophet had greatly increased. It was when the cup of their iniquities had become full to the brim and their presence in Medina had proved to be a constant source of mortal danger to Muslims and the Islamic State that the Holy Prophet had to take action against them. They were told to leave Medina. But the Prophet was exceptionally kind and considerate to them. He allowed them to carry their goods and chattels with them, and they departed from Medina in perfect safety, but not until they had despaired of the help they had expected from their Meccan allies and from the hypocrites of Medina, and had also found that their fortresses which they thought were impregnable could not save them. The Holy Prophet laid siege to the fortresses and after vainly holding out for about 21 days, they surrendered. They all left for Syria, only two families choosing to remain behind at Khaibar.

The reference in the words, "at the time of the first banishment" may be to the banishment of the Jewish tribe of Banū Qainuqā' who had been expelled from Medina, sometime after the Battle of Badr, for their intrigues and defiance of the authority

of the Holy Prophet, to whom they had pledged allegiance as the acknowledged Head of the Medina Republic. Or the words may refer to the banishment by the Holy Prophet from Medina of the three above-mentioned Jewish tribes. This was the first banishment. 'Umar, the Holy Prophet's Second Successor, however, banished all Jews from the whole of Arabia for the second and last time. Thus the words, "at the time of the first banishment" may be taken as embodying a prophecy that after the Jewish tribes of Medina will have been banished by the Holy Prophet, all the Jews of Arabia would suffer the same fate at some later time.

Before departing from Medina the Banū Naḍīr had destroyed their houses and other movable property before the very eyes of Muslims, because the Holy Prophet had given them ten days to dispose of their affairs as they liked. Thus the Jews of Medina were the originators of the scorched earth policy, centuries before the Russians had adopted it in the World War I. The reference in the words "they destroyed their houses with their own hands," is to that policy.

The words, "you would not think that they would go forth," show that in view of the material resources, political alliances and organization of the Jews of Medina, the Muslims could not conceive that they could be driven out of Medina so easily and without any loss of human life on either side.

4. And had it not been that Allah had decreed exile for them, He would have surely punished them *otherwise* in this world. And in the Hereafter they will certainly have the punishment of the Fire.⁴¹⁹¹

5. That is because they opposed Allah and His Messenger;^a and whoso opposes Allah—then surely Allah is Severe in retribution.^{4191A}

6. Whatever palm-trees you cut down or left standing on their roots, it was by Allah's leave, and that He might disgrace the transgressors.⁴¹⁹²

وَلَوْلَا أَنْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَلَاءَ
لَعَذَّبَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ
عَذَابُ النَّارِ ④

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُّوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ وَمَنْ
يُشَاقِّ اللَّهَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ⑤

مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ لِّينَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا
قَائِمَةً عَلَى أَصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ⑥

^a4:116; 8:14; 47:33.

4191. Important Words:

الجلاء (the banishment) is derived from جلا (jalā). They say جلا عن بلده i.e. he migrated from his home. جلا عنه الهم means, he removed the grief from him or banished him. أجلاه means he exiled (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that by their persistent evil designs and treachery the Jews of Medina, particularly the Banū Naḍīr, had incurred God's wrath. Their exile from Medina was a very light punishment. They had deserved a much heavier punishment, and had they not been exiled they would have been severely punished in some other form.

4191A. Commentary:

The verse shows that opposition to a Prophet is tantamount to opposing God Himself.

4192. Important Words:

لين (palm tree) is derived from لان which means, it was or became tender, smooth, gentle. لين means, a palm tree. It is a kind of palm tree of which the dates are of very inferior quality and are unfit for human consumption (Aqrab & Ar-Rauḍul-Anaf).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to the cutting, by orders of the Holy Prophet, of the palm trees of the Banū Naḍīr who, as stated in v. 3, had shut

7. And whatever Allah has given to His Messenger as spoils from them, you urged neither horse nor camel for that; but Allah gives authority to His Messenger over whomsoever He pleases; and Allah has power over all things. ⁴¹⁹³

وَمَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ فَمَا أَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٧﴾

themselves up in their fortresses in defiance of the Holy Prophet's orders to surrender. After the siege had lasted for a few days, the Holy Prophet, in order to compel them to surrender, ordered that some of their palm trees of the *līna* (لينة) kind of which the dates are of very inferior quality and are quite unfit for human consumption should be cut down. It was after only six trees had been cut down, that the Banū Naḍīr surrendered (Zurqānī). The orders of the Holy Prophet were extremely lenient and were legitimate and quite in conformity with the laws of civilized warfare.

4193. Important Words:

أَفَاءَ (given as spoils) is transitive verb from فاء which means, he returned, particularly he returned to a good state or condition. أُنَاتَهُ means, I made it to return. فَيْء means, afternoon shade; spoil or booty, so called because it returns from one party without difficulty; such of the possessions of disbelievers as accrue to Muslims without war or such as are obtained from them after laying down of arms. Loosely, the three

words فَيْء and غَنِيمَة and نَفْل are used synonymously. But whereas according to some غَنِيمَة signifies, what is obtained from disbelievers by force during war, فَيْء signifies, what is obtained from them after laying down of arms or what God has given to Muslims of the goods of disbelievers such as poll-tax and that for which peace has been made with them or which they acquire without difficulty. According to some authorities غَنِيمَة is more general in signification than نَفْل, and فَيْء is more so than غَنِيمَة. According to the lawyers everything that may be lawfully taken of the property and goods of disbelievers is فَيْء. Thus غَنِيمَة is that which is acquired with or without difficulty or labour, before or after the victory and نَفْل is that which is had before the division of غَنِيمَة or which is acquired without fighting, and it differs from فَيْء in this respect that whereas فَيْء is applied to the spoil from the disbelievers after they have made preparation for war against Muslims, this condition does not apply to نَفْل (Lane & Aqrab).

رِكَاب (camels) is derived from رَكَب. They say رَكَب الدَّابَّةَ او عَلَى الدَّابَّةِ i.e. he rode

8. Whatever Allah has given to His Messenger as spoils^a from the people of the towns is for Allah and for the Messenger and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, that it may not circulate *only* among those of you who are rich. And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it^b; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain from it. And fear Allah; surely, Allah is Severe in retribution. **4194**

مَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَى
فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۚ لَيْ لَا يَكُونُ
دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ ۚ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ
الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ ۖ وَمَا نَهَكُمُ عَنْهُ
فَانْتَهُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ
الْعِقَابِ ۝٨

^a8:2, 42. ^b47:34; 49:8.

upon the beast. ركب means camels used for riding. It has no proper singular; the word used for singular is رحالة. ركب السحاب means, the winds (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse may have special reference to the spoils the Muslims got from the Jews of Khaibar. See next verse also.

4194. Important Words:

دولة (to circulate) is derived from دال. They say دالت الايام i.e. the days came round in their turns. دالت له الدولة means, good fortune came to him i.e. the turn of fortune was his. داول الله الايام بين الناس means, God made days to compound among men in turns. دولة (daulatun) as also دولة (dūlatun) means, a turn of good fortune; a turn to share in wealth and to prevail in war; a turn of

taking a thing. Or دولة (dūlatun) is in wealth and دولة (daulatun) is in war; according to some the former signifies a thing that is taken by turns and the latter the act of taking by turns and a transition from one state to another. Or the former relates to the next world and the latter to the present world and it is said that the former signifies the transition of wealth from one people to another and the latter, prevalence, predominance or victory (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse deals with the subject as to how فية should be spent. As فية consists of such booty as is attained without difficulty or labour and accrues to Muslims without war, the soldiers have no share in it and the whole of it forms part of the public

9. *These spoils are for the poor Refugees who have been driven out from their homes and their possessions while seeking grace from Allah and His pleasure,^a and helping Allah and His Messenger. These it is who are true in their faith.*⁴¹⁹⁵

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا
مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيُصْرُونَ اللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ۝

^a5:3; 48:30.

treasury to be spent as mentioned in the verse.

Where soldiers are paid by the State, all spoils of war go to the public treasury i.e. *Baitul-Māl*. Islam being a great advocate and protagonist of the cause of the poor and supporter and protector of their interests, the verse incidentally lays down the principle that the circulation of wealth should not remain continued to the privileged and propertied class. As an individual's health requires that his physical needs be reasonably met, a society's health requires that material goods be widely distributed and wealth be in easy circulation. This is the basic principle of Muslim economics and nowhere did the Holy Prophet's democratic thunder speak with greater force or clarity than in this field. Finding humanity ground down under the tyranny of vested interests, he propounded measures that broke the barriers of economic caste and enormously reduced the injustices of special privilege. The main principle of Muslim economics is that the wealth of the people be widely shared. Islam does not oppose

the profit motive or economic competition. It does not discourage a man from working harder than his neighbour, nor does it object to his earning a large income. It simply insists that acquisitiveness and competition be balanced by fair play and compassion. Since human nature automatically takes care of the former, it falls to social laws to safeguard the latter. The *Zakāh* is Islam's basic device for institutionalizing regard for others, but it is supplemented by a number of other measures (*The Religions of Man* by Huston Smith).

The words, "whatever the Messenger gives you, take it," shows conclusively that the *Sunnah* forms an integral part of the Islamic Law.

4195. Commentary:

الفقراء seems to be case in apposition to the categories of recipients of the نبي mentioned in the preceding verse. From Ḥadīth it appears that the poor Refugees were the greatest beneficiaries from نبي obtained from Banū Naḍīr.

10. And *for* those who had established *their* home in *this* city and had accepted the faith before them, they love those who come to them for refuge, and find not in their breasts any desire for that which is given them (Refugees), but prefer *the Refugees* alone themselves, even though poverty be their *own* lot. And whoso is rid of the covetousness of his own soul—it is these who will be successful.^a 4196

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّؤُا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ
قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا
يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا
أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ
بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۗ وَمَنْ يُوَفِّقْ شَيْخَ نَفْسِهِ
فَإُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

^a64:17.

4196. Important Words:

حاجة (desire) is derived from حاج which means, he was or became poor; he desired, sought or sought after. حاجة means, he needed it. حاجة means, want, need, necessity; a thing wanted; an object of want; desire (Lane & Aqrab).

خصاصة (poverty) is inf. noun from خص which means, he was or became poor, in a state of poverty. خصاصة means, poverty, need; straightness or difficulty; an evil state or condition; thirst; hunger (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Whereas the preceding verse constituted an eloquent commentary on the sincerity and devotion of the Refugees (مهاجرين) to their faith, in that they left their hearths and homes for

the sake of God and his Messenger, the verse under comment embodies a great testimonial to the spirit of self-sacrifice, hospitality and goodwill of the Helpers (انصار). The Refugees from Mecca came to the Helpers, deprived and denuded of all their possessions, and the latter received them with open arms and made them equal partners in their belongings. The bond of love and brotherhood which the Holy Prophet established between the Refugees and the Helpers, and to which this verse bears an eloquent testimony, stands unrivalled in the whole history of human relationships. The verse may have special reference to the Helpers having foregone their share in the spoils that accrued to Muslims from the Jewish tribe of Banū Naḍīr.

11. And *the spoils are also for* those who came after them. They say, 'Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in the faith, and leave not in our hearts any rancour against those who believe. Our Lord! Thou art indeed Compassionate, Merciful.'⁴¹⁹⁷

R. 2.

12. Hast thou not seen those who are hypocrites? They say to their brethren who disbelieve among the People of the Book, 'If you are turned out, we will surely go out with you, and we will never obey anyone against you: and if you are fought against, we will certainly help you.' But Allah bears witness that surely they are liars.⁴¹⁹⁸

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا
بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا
لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا يَقُولُونَ
لِإِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ
أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ
مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نطيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا أَبَدًا
وَإِنْ قُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنْصُرَنَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ
أَنَّهُمْ كَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

4197. Commentary:

The words "those who came after them," may apply to the Refugees who came later to Medina, or to all the coming generations of Muslims, or particularly to the followers of the Promised Messiah to whom a pointed reference is made in 62:3.

The later generations of Muslims have been commanded here to pray for their brethren in Faith of earlier generations and to pray also that their own hearts be completely cleansed of all bitterness and spite towards true and sincere Muslims. What a beautiful recipe by which Muslims

can become cemented into a well-knit community!

4198. Commentary:

A hypocrite is a liar and a coward. He is completely unreliable and devoid of all honour. The hypocrites of Medina had urged the Jews of Medina to defy the Holy Prophet and break their plighted word with him, holding out to them false promises of help and succour in time of need. But when relying upon their promises the Jews defied the Prophet and he, in order to punish them, marched against them, the Hypocrites left them in the lurch.

13. If they are turned out, they will never go out with them; and if they are fought against they will never help them. And even if they help them, they will assuredly turn *their* backs;^a and then they shall not be helped.⁴¹⁹⁹

14. Of a truth, they have greater fear of you in their hearts than of Allah.^b That is because they are a people who are devoid of *all* reason.

15. They will not fight you in a body except in fortified towns or from behind walls. Their fighting among themselves is severe. Thou thinkest them to be united, but their hearts are divided. That is because they are a people who have no sense.⁴²⁰⁰

لَيْسَ أَخْرَجُوا لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ
وَلَيْسَ قُوتُوا لَا يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ وَلَيْسَ
نَصْرُهُمْ لِيُؤْتُوا الْأَذْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا
يَنْصُرُونَ ١٧

لَا أَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ
اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ١٨

لَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قُرَى
مُحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ ۚ بَأْسُهُمْ
بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ ۚ تَحْسِبُهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ
شَتَّى ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ١٩

^a3:112. ^b4:78.

4199. Commentary:

This verse, like vv. 15-16 below, is a sad commentary on the infidelity of the hypocrites. When the hour arrived for the Jews to be deservedly punished for their evil designs and deeds, the hypocrites of Medina did not raise a finger in their support. "And," says the verse, "if they had summoned up courage enough to come to the help of the Jews, they certainly would have suffered a most crushing and ignominious defeat."

4200. Commentary:

The verse means that disbelievers—particularly the Jews and the hypocrites of Medina—seem to present a false facade of unity against Islam, but as they have no common cause to fight for, and as their interests are diverse and divergent, there can possibly exist no real unity among them. There were three parties in Arabia who appeared to be united against the Islamic State—the Jews, the hypocrites of Medina and the pagan Quraish of Mecca. The Quraish

16. *Their case is like the case of those who have, a short time before them, tasted the evil consequences of their doings. And for them is a painful punishment.*⁴²⁰¹

كَمَثَلِ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا ذَاقُوا
وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ^{١٦}

17. *Or ^ait is like that of Satan, when he says to man, 'Disbelieve;' but when he disbelieves, he says, 'I have nothing to do with thee; I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds.'*⁴²⁰²

كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ^{١٧}
فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِنْكَ إِنِّي
أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ^{١٧}

18. And the end of both will be that they will both be in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the reward of the wrongdoers.

فَكَانَ عَاقِبَتُهُمَا أَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا^{١٨} وَذَلِكَ جَزَاُ الظَّالِمِينَ^{١٨}

R. 3.

19. ^bO ye who believe! fear Allah; and let *every* soul look to

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَتَنْظُرُوا

^a8:49; 14:23. ^b4:2; 33:71.

found in the rising power of Islam a danger to their autocracy, the hypocrites (of whom 'Abdullāh bin Ubayy was the leader) to their domination in Medina, and the Jews to their organization and racial superiority. Having no common objective their seeming unity had no real basis and it never materialized in time of danger.

4201. Commentary:

The reference in the verse may be to the Quraish of Mecca who sustained an ignominious defeat at Badr or to Banū Qainuqā' who were

punished for their mischief and machinations after Badr. They were the first of the three Jewish tribes who broke their pledged word with the Holy Prophet and were banished from Medina one month after the Battle of Badr. They settled in Syria.

4202. Commentary:

The verse mentions one more mark of a hypocrite. When relying upon his seductive promises his victim gets involved in trouble, he leaves him alone, disowning all responsibility for his misfortune.

what it sends forth for the morrow. And fear Allah; verily Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴²⁰³

20. And be not like those who forgot Allah,^a so He has caused to forget their own souls. It is they that are the rebellious.⁴²⁰⁴

21. The inmates of the Fire and the inmates of the Garden are not equal^b. It is the inmates of the Garden that will triumph.⁴²⁰⁵

22. If We had sent down this Quran on a mountain^c, thou wouldst certainly have seen it humbled and rent asunder for fear of Allah. And these are similitudes that We set forth for mankind that they may reflect.⁴²⁰⁶

نَفْسٍ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ
أَنْفُسَهُمْ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

لَا يَسْتَوِي أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ وَأَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ
أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْنَاهُ
خَاشِعًا مُّصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ
الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

^a9:67. ^b38:29; 45:22. ^c13:32.

4203. Commentary:

The root cause of all sin is neglect and negligence. The believers here are enjoined to take care of the morrow. And there could be no real moral or spiritual progress without a sure, sincere and true belief in God.

4204. Commentary:

Man forgets God in three ways: (1) He rejects the very belief in the existence of God. (2) He has no real, true or living belief in a Supreme Being before Whom he shall have to render an account of his deeds (3) Forgetfulness. The inevitable and

never-failing consequence of consigning God to oblivion is that man gets involved in matters which bring about his moral degradation and spiritual downfall, ending with loss of peace of mind.

4205. Commentary:

The inmates of the Fire have been mentioned in the preceding verse and the inmates of the Garden in the verse before that. The present verse states that the two parties are not, and never can be, equal.

4206. Commentary:

Metaphorically, the word جبل

23. He is Allah, and there is no God beside Him, the Knower of the unseen and the seen.^a He is the Gracious, the Merciful. **4207**

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ
وَالشَّهَادَةِ ۚ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. He is Allah, and there is no God beside Him, the Sovereign, the Holy One,^b the Source of Peace, the Bestower of Security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is Allah *far* above that which they associate *with Him*. **4208**

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ أَمْلِكُ
الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ
الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ
عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. His are the

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ

^a6:74; 9:94; 13:10; 64:19. ^b7:181; 20:9; 62:2.

signifies a big and proud man; the chief or leader of a people. In this sense of the word the verse would mean that the Quran contains such a sublime and powerful Message that it would make the heart of even a proud man melt. Or the verse may signify that the proud pagan Arabs whom no pre-Islamic teaching could wean from their polytheistic beliefs and idolatrous practices and who like a strong rock remained unmoved and firmly wedded to their Bedouin usages unaffected by the erosive influence of the glamour and glitter of the neighbouring Christian civilization, would be humbled before its sublime and powerful Message, and from their stony hearts would gush forth fountains of light and learning.

4207. Commentary:

The verse means that the Quran,

before whose powerful Message even tall and firm mountains would crumble and fall, has been revealed by God Whose attributes are inimitable and matchless. He knows everything and nothing is hidden from Him. He provides his creatures, out of His bountiful grace and mercy, and not in return for anything done by them, all the means of their development and progress even before they are born.

4208. Commentary:

God is the King Who is free from every fault, defect, or deficiency. He is the Source of all peace, and the Granter of safety and security. He is Guardian over all, overcoming every power, the Mender of every breakage and the Restorer of every loss; and He is above every need and is the Besought of all.

most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him,^a and He is the Mighty, the Wise.⁴²⁰⁹

لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا
فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝٢٥

^a17:45; 24:42; 61:2; 62:2; 64:2.

4209. Commentary:

God, as represented by the Quran, is the Maker of bodies, the Creator of souls, the Fashioner i.e. the Giver of final touches to things created by Him. Such is the God of Islam, the

Mighty, the Wise. To Him belong all excellent titles that man can imagine. The dwellers of the heavens and the earth declare His sanctity and holiness. He is the Great, and the Powerful.

CHAPTER 60

AL-MUMTAḤINAH

(Revealed after Hijrah)

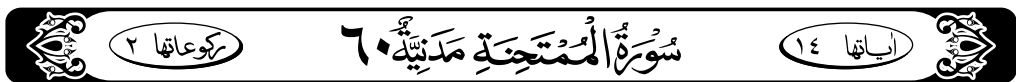
Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

Like its three predecessors this *Sūrah* was revealed, as its contents show, at Medina, in the 7th or 8th year of Hijrah, sometime during the interval between the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah and the Fall of Mecca. The *Sūrah* takes its title from the 11th verse in which it is enjoined that believing women should be examined when they come as refugees. The preceding *Sūrah* had dealt with the intrigues and machinations of the hypocrites and the Jews of Medina and with the punishment which was meted out to them. The present *Sūrah* deals with the believers' social relations with disbelievers in general, and with those at war with Islam in particular, making a pointed reference to the status and position in Muslim society of believing women who migrated to Medina, and also to those disbelieving women who left their believing husbands at Medina and went to Mecca.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with an emphatic prohibitory injunction to Muslims against having friendly relations with those disbelievers who are at war with, and are bent upon extirpating Islam. The injunction is so strict and comprehensive that even very near blood relationships have not been exempted from it. The noble conduct in this respect of the Patriarch Abraham, who did not hesitate to sever all connections with his uncle, Āzar, who had proved himself to be an enemy of God, has been held out as an example to be followed. The prohibitory injunction is followed by an implied prophecy that very soon the implacable enemies of Islam would become its devoted followers. The injunction, however, has its exception. It does not apply to those disbelievers who have good neighbourly relations with Muslims and are not inimically disposed towards them. Such disbelievers are to be treated equitably and with kindness.

Next, the *Sūrah* lays down some important directions with regard to believing women who migrated to Medina, and also with regard to women who left Medina and went over to disbelievers. In order to bring home to Muslims the seriousness and importance of the matter, the *Sūrah* closes with a reminder of the injunction that Muslims are not to make friends with those people, who, by adopting an openly hostile attitude towards Islam, have incurred God's wrath.



(AL-MUMTAḤINAH)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. O ye who believe! take not My enemy and your enemy for friends,^b offering them love, while they disbelieve in the truth which has come to you *and*^c drive out the Messenger and yourselves *merely* because you believe in Allah, your Lord. If you go forth, to strive in My cause and seek My pleasure, take *them not for friends*, sending them *messages of love* in secret, while I know best what you conceal and what you reveal. And whoever of you does it, has, surely, lost the right path.⁴²¹⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِمَا جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ الْحَقِّ يُخْرِجُونَ الرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ رَبِّكُمْ ۖ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ خَرَجْتُمْ جِهَادًا فِي سَبِيلِي وَابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِي تُسِرُّونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ ۖ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا أَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُمْ ۖ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْهُ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ②

^aSee 1:1. ^b3:119; 4:145; 5:58. ^c17:77.

4210. Commentary:

The prohibitory injunction contained in the verse is of a very strict character. Muslims are not to have friendly relations with the avowed enemies of God—those who drove out the Prophet and the Muslims from their hearths and homes and sought to destroy Islam. The prohibition is all-comprehensive in this respect that no consideration of bonds or ties of even the nearest blood relationships is

allowed to interfere with it. The enemy of Islam is God's enemy, whosoever he may be.

The immediate occasion of the revelation of the verse under comment was that when the Quraish did not honour the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyyah, and the Holy Prophet had to take stern punitive action against them, Ḥaṭīb bin Abī Balṭa'ḥ had written a secret letter to the Meccans informing them of the Holy

3. If they get the upper hand of you, they will be your *active* enemies, and will stretch forth their hands and their tongues towards you with evil *intent*; and they ardently desire that you should become disbelievers.⁴²¹¹

إِنْ يَتَّقِفُواكُمْ يَكُونُوا لَكُمْ أَعْدَاءَ
وَيَسْطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ وَأَلْسِنَتَهُمُ
بِالسُّوءِ وَوَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ ۖ

4. "Neither your ties of kindred ^{عَلَى الْوَحْدَانِ} nor your children will avail aught on the Day of Resurrection. He will decide between you. And Allah sees all that you do.⁴²¹²

لَنْ تَنْفَعَكُمْ أَرْحَامُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ ۚ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ ۚ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۖ وَاللَّهُ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝

^a3:11; 31:34.

Prophet's intended march on Mecca. The Prophet, informed by revelation about it sent 'Alī, Zubair and Miqdād, in search of the bearer of the letter. They overtook the messenger—she was a woman—on the way to Mecca and the letter was brought back to Medina. Hātib's offence was extremely grave. He had sought to divulge an important State secret. He deserved exemplary punishment. Incidentally, the episode of the letter fixes the date of revelation of the *Sūrah*.

4211. Important Words:

يَتَّقِفُواكُمْ (get the upper hand of you) is derived from تَقَفَّ and تَقَفَّه means, he perceived it or attained it by deed or by knowledge; he reached him; he found him; he overtook him; he gained mastery over him; he overcame

him and got possession of him (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse indicates how bitter the feelings of disbelievers are towards Muslims. They would use all means, their hands and tongues, etc. and would spare no effort to harm Muslims, and the greatest desire of their hearts is to see them revert to disbelief.

4212. Commentary:

The verse constitutes a severe warning to those Muslims who, in defiance of the above clear Divine commandment, maintain friendly relations with their relatives, if the latter are at war with them or entertain hostile feelings towards Islam. The commandment makes no exception even of the nearest blood relations.

5. ^a“There is a good model for you in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people, ^b“We have nothing to do with you and with that which you worship beside Allah. We disbelieve all that you *believe*. There has arisen enmity and hatred between us and you for ever, until you believe in Allah alone’—except that Abraham said to his father, ^c“I will surely ask forgiveness for thee, though I have no power to do aught for thee against Allah.’ *They prayed to God saying, ‘Our Lord, in Thee do we put our trust and to Thee do we turn repentant, and towards Thee is the final return.*

4213

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا
بِرَّآءٌ وَأَمْنُكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ كُفْرُنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَائِبِنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ
الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا
بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ إِلَّا قَوْلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ
لَا اسْتَعْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَمَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ
مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا
وَإِلَيْكَ أُنَبِّئَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ۝

^a60:7. ^b6:79; 43:27. ^c9:114; 19:48; 26:87.

4213. Commentary:

Abraham, as elsewhere stated in the Quran (11:76), was a model of forbearance and tender-heartedness. His example has been mentioned here to emphasize the fact that whenever it becomes clear that a certain person or people are inimically disposed towards Truth and are bent upon extirpating it, all friendly relations with them are to be given up. The verse also implies that when God has brought into being a better

brotherhood—the Brotherhood of Faith—than blood relationships, then why should Muslims be anxious to have friendly relations with those who are the enemies of God and His Prophet?

The expression كفرنا بكم which is generally translated as, "we disbelieve all that you believe" may also mean, "we have nothing to do with you;" the words كفر بكذا meaning, he declared himself to be clear or quit of such a thing (Lane).

6. 'Our Lord, make us not a trial for those who disbelieve,^a and forgive us, our Lord; for Thou alone art the Mighty, the Wise.'⁴²¹⁴

7. Surely, there is a good example in them for you^b—for *all* who have hope in Allah and the Last Day. And whosoever turns away—truly, Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.

R. 2.

8. It may be that Allah will bring about love between you and those of them with whom you are *now* at enmity; and Allah is All-Powerful; and Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.⁴²¹⁵

9. Allah forbids you not, respecting those who have not

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَا ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ ①

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن
كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ ۖ وَمَن
يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ②

عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَجْعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ
عَادَيْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ مَوَدَّةً ۖ وَاللَّهُ قَدِيرٌ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ③

لَا يَنْهَى اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ

^a10:86. ^b60:5.

4214. Commentary:

In the preceding verses believers were enjoined not to have friendly relations with those disbelievers who were at war with them as it was calculated to weaken the solidarity of the former. The verse under comment, teaches them to pray that God may save them from disobeying this wise Divine commandment, as its disregard is sure to weaken Muslim solidarity and thus to provide encouragement to disbelievers to attack them.

4215. Commentary:

The verse implied a prophecy. The Companions of the Holy Prophet were told that if they were enjoined to renounce all friendly relations with the enemies of their Faith, even though the latter were their very near blood relations, the prohibition was indeed destined to be very short-lived. The time was fast approaching when the erstwhile enemies would become their loving friends. The prophecy was soon fulfilled. After the Fall of Mecca, the Quraish joined the fold of Islam *en masse* and became

fought against you on account of *your* religion, and who have not driven you forth from your homes, that you be kind to them and deal equitably with them; surely, Allah loves those who are equitable. ⁴²¹⁶

10. ^aAllah only forbids you, respecting those who have fought against you on account of *your* religion, and have driven you out of your homes, and have helped *others* in driving you out, that you make friends with them, and whosoever makes friends with them—it is these that are the transgressors. ⁴²¹⁷

11. O ye who believe! when believing women come to you as Refugees, examine them. Allah knows best their faith. Then, if

يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ
مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا
إِلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ۝

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَى اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ
فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ
وَضَهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنْ
تَوَلَّوْهُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ۝

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا جَاءَكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ
مُهَاجِرَاتٍ فَامْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۚ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ

^a4:145; 5:52.

united with Muslims into one brotherhood.

4216. Commentary:

The verse makes it clear that the commandment to Muslims to have nothing to do with disbelievers has a proviso. It applies only to those disbelievers, as the next verse shows, who are at war with Muslims and are inimically disposed towards Islam. Friendly relations as such with non-Muslims are not forbidden. Besides,

extra emphasis has been laid, in this verse, on kind and equitable treatment of non-Muslims.

The fact that this and the following verse were revealed at a time when relations between Muslims and disbelievers were highly strained helps to understand the real purpose and object of the prohibitory commandment.

4217. Commentary:

See preceding verse.

you find them *true* believers, send them not back to the disbelievers. These *women* are not lawful for them, nor are they lawful for these *women*. But give *their disbelieving husbands* what they have spent on them. Thereafter it is no sin for you to marry them, when you have given them their dowries.^a And hold not to *your* matrimonial ties with the disbelieving women;^b but demand *the return* of that which you have spent; and let *the disbelievers* demand that which they have spent. That is the judgement of Allah. He judges between you. And Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.⁴²¹⁸

بِإِيمَانِهِمْ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ
فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ
لَهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ وَاتُّوهُمُ
مَا أَنْفَقُوا وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ
تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ
وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعَصَمِ الْكُوفَرِ وَسَلُّوا
مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ وَلَيْسَ لَكُمْ أَنْفَقُوا ذَلِكُمْ
حُكْمُ اللَّهِ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ
عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

^a4:5, 25. ^b2:222.

4218. Commentary:

Here is a testimony to the irresistible appeal of the Message of Islam. At a time when Muslims were being bitterly persecuted and it was not safe to leave Mecca and join the Muslim Community at Medina, a continuous stream of believers was pouring into Medina, leaving behind in Mecca their dear and near ones. These Refugees contained a fair number of women among them. The verse under comment refers to such refugee Muslim women. The verse

also constitutes an eloquent commentary on the Holy Prophet's anxiety not to accept into the Muslim Community any woman who had fled from Mecca unless there was proof available, after subjecting her to searching examination, that she was sincere, and honest in her faith and that she was accepting Islam out of no ulterior or otherwise objectionable motives. The verse further states that the marriage-tie between a refugee believing woman and her disbelieving husband becomes dissolved when she joins the Muslim

12. And if any of your wives goes away from you to the disbelievers, and you have your turn of triumph and get some spoils from them, then give to those believers whose wives have gone away the like of that which they had spent on their wives. And fear Allah in Whom you believe.⁴²¹⁹

وَإِنْ فَاتَكُمْ شَيْءٌ مِّنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمُ إِلَى
الْكُفَّارِ فَعَاقِبْتُمْ فَاتُوا الَّذِينَ ذَهَبَتْ
أَزْوَاجُهُمْ مِّثْلَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
الَّذِي أَنْتُم بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٧﴾

Community, and a believer is allowed to marry such a woman, provided he fulfils two conditions: (a) He should have paid back to the disbelieving husband of such woman what the latter had spent on her, and (b) he should also have fixed or paid her dowry. Similarly, the marriage-tie between a Muslim and his wife who gives up Islam could not continue and the same procedure would be adopted if such an apostate woman marries a disbeliever as in the case of marriage between a Muslim and a refugee believing woman. The reciprocal arrangement prescribed in this verse is not the private affair of the individuals concerned but is to be carried out by the State, as is the practice in time of war, to which the verses particularly apply; there could not and should not continue any social relations between individual believers and individual disbelievers.

4219. Important Words:

عَاقِبْتُمْ (you have your turn) is derived from عَقِبَ. They say عَقِبَ الرجل i.e. he took from the man's property the like

of what the latter had taken from him. عَاقِبَ means, he did a thing with the man alternately and taking his turn; he retaliated (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

If the wife of a Muslim deserts to disbelievers and thereafter a woman from among disbelievers is taken by Muslims as prisoner of war, or she flees from disbelievers and joins the Muslim Community, then the believing husband is to be compensated for the loss of the dowry paid by him to his deserting wife from the sum due to the disbelieving husband whose wife has joined the Muslim Community if the dowries are equal, but the deficiency, if any, is to be made up collectively by Muslims, or, as some authorities say, from the booty acquired by Muslims in war; the word عَاقِبْتُمْ meaning غَنِمْتُمْ i.e. you have acquired booty. This arrangement was necessary as disbelievers refused to return the dowries paid by their believing husbands to the women who had deserted to them.

13. O Prophet! when believing women come to thee, taking the oath of allegiance *at thy hands* that they will not associate anything with Allah, and that they will not steal, and will not commit adultery, nor kill their children, nor bring forth a scandalous charge which they themselves have deliberately forged, nor disobey thee in what is right, then accept their allegiance and ask Allah to forgive them. Verily, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.⁴²²⁰

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ
يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَى أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا
وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ
أَوْلَادَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِهَتَّانٍ يَفْتَرِيهِ
بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْصِيَنَّكَ
فِي مَعْرُوفٍ فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ
اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

14. O ye who believe! take not for friends a people with whom Allah is wroth;^a they have indeed despaired of the Hereafter just as have the disbelievers despaired of those who are in the graves.⁴²²¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا
غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَدْ يَدْسُوا مِنْ
الْآخِرَةِ كَمَا يَدْسِ الْكُفَّارُ مِنْ
أَصْحَابِ الْقُبُورِ ﴿١٤﴾

^a58:15.

4220. Commentary:

The expression, بين أيديهن و أرجلهن means from themselves or by themselves.

4221. Commentary:

The verse sums up the subject matter of the *Sūrah*, viz. that there could be no real union of hearts without community of ideals and principles and that the beliefs and ideas of believers and disbelievers are

poles apart from each other. The last sentence of the verse may mean that disbelievers have despaired of the Hereafter i.e. they have absolute no faith in the Hereafter, just as they have no faith that the dead would ever again come to life. The word "they" may also refer to the Jews, since the expression "with whom Allah is wroth," has been used about the Jews in several verses of the Quran.

CHAPTER 61

AS-ŞAFF

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This *Sūrah* takes its title from v. 5 which enjoins Muslims to fight in the cause of Allah in solid ranks (صَفًّا), "as if they were a strong, cemented structure." The *Sūrah* was revealed at Medina, probably in the third or fourth year of Hijrah, after the Battle of Uḥud, as v. 5 seems to possess an implied reference to the lack of discipline or unquestioning obedience to the Holy Prophet, of which some of the Muslims were guilty in that battle. The preceding two *Sūrahs* had dealt with the subject of war against disbelievers, and with social and political problems arising out of it. The *Sūrah* under comment emphasizes the importance of giving unqualified and unquestioning obedience to the leader, and of presenting, under his guidance, a solid, compact and united front to disbelievers.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with the glorification of God's Wisdom and Might, and proceeds to admonish believers that when they glorify God and extol His holiness with their tongues, they should also glorify Him with their actions, thus making their actions harmonize with their verbal declarations. So, when they are called upon to fight in the cause of truth, they should present a firm and solid front to disbelievers, and should give unqualified obedience to their Leader.

The *Sūrah* then makes a brief reference to the misbehaviour of the followers of Moses who, by disobeying and defying him, caused him much vexation and mental anguish, and, by implication, warns Muslims never to behave like them. Next, mention is made of the prophecy of Jesus about the advent of the Holy Prophet, followed by a firm declaration that all the attempts of the votaries of darkness to extinguish the Light of Allah would come to nought. The Light will continue to shine in all its glory and effulgence and Islam will prevail over all religions. But before this comes to pass, the followers of Islam shall have to "strive with their wealth and persons in the cause of Allah." Only then will they deserve to be blessed with God's pleasure and material glory—"with Gardens through which streams flow." The *Sūrah* closes with exhorting Muslims to help God's cause, as did the disciples of Jesus by undergoing all manner of sacrifice and suffering for it.



(AŞ-ŞAFF)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bWhatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.⁴²²²

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ② وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ③

3. O ye who believe! why do you say what you do not?⁴²²³

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ④

4. Most hateful is it in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not.

كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ⑤

5. ^cVerily, Allah loves those who fight in His cause arrayed in *solid* ranks, as though they were a *strong* structure cemented with *molten* lead.⁴²²⁴

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًّا ⑥ كَأَنَّهُمْ بُيُوتٌ مَرْصُوصَةٌ ⑦

^aSee 1:1. ^b17:45; 24:42; 57:2; 62:2; 64:2. ^c9:111.

4222. Commentary:

See 57:2.

4223. Commentary:

Muslims are told here that their actions should correspond to their professions. Boastful, empty talk carries one nowhere and verbal professions unattended by deeds smack of hypocrisy and insincerity.

4224. Important Words:

مرصوص (strong). They say رص البناء i.e. he made the building firm and compact, or he made it firm and strong; he joined it together; he stuck

it together, one part to another, so that there might be no interstice in it; he plastered it with lead. تراصوا means, they placed themselves close together in prayer or in battle so that there was no intervening space among them. بئر مرصوصة means, a well cased with lead (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Muslims are expected to present a firm, compact and united front to the forces of evil under the command of their leader whom they should give full and unqualified obedience. But for a people to become united into a solid

6. And *remember* when Moses said to his people, ‘O my people, why do you vex and slander me and you know that I am Allah’s Messenger unto you?’ So when they deviated *from the right course*, Allah caused their hearts to deviate, for Allah guides not the rebellious people.⁴²²⁵

7. And *remember* when Jesus, son of Mary, said, ‘O children of Israel, surely I am Allah’s Messenger unto you, fulfilling that which is before me of the Torah, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger who will come after me; his name being Ahmad.’ And when he came to them with clear

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يُقَوْمِ لِمَ
تُؤْذُونَنِي وَقَدْ تَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
إِلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ
قُلُوبَهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الْفَاسِقِينَ ①

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ بَنِي
إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ
مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ
وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ
أَحْمَدٌ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا

and strong community, they must possess one code of life, one ideal, one objective and destination and one programme to achieve that objective.

4225. Commentary:

Perhaps no Prophet of God suffered so much mental agony at the hands of his followers as did Moses. Among many other signs Moses’s people had seen the mighty hosts of Pharaoh drown before their very eyes and yet they had hardly crossed the sea when they wanted to revert to idolatry, and seeing some people worshipping idols asked Moses to set up one such idol for them. They defied Moses’s brother, the Prophet Aaron, and

worshipped the calf (7:149). When asked to march into Canaan which God had promised to them they scornfully and quite brazen-facedly told Moses to go with his Lord upon Whom he had relied so much; they were not going to budge an inch from the place where they had settled (5:25). Thus Moses was repeatedly insulted by, and balked in his efforts to reclaim from idolatry, the very people whom he had delivered from the crushing bondage of Pharaoh. They even slandered and defamed him. It is to such vexatious act of these ungrateful people that the Quran has referred in 33:70.

proofs,^a they said, ‘This is manifest sorcery.’ **4226**

هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

^a27:14; 43:31.

4226. Important Words:

أحمد (Aḥmad) is derived from حمد and حمده means, he praised, eulogised or commended him; spoke well of him; he requited him; he gave him his due. أحمد (Aḥmada) means, he did or said that for which he should be praised or which was praiseworthy. أحمد الشيء means, the thing was or became praiseworthy. أحمد means, one who praises much or who is praised much or most (Lane & Tāj).

Commentary:

The prophecy of Jesus about the coming of *Paraclete* or the Comforter or the Spirit of Truth as given in the Gospels is as follows:

I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive because it sees him not, neither knoweth him... but when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me... for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you... I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you unto all truth, for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come... He shall glorify

me (John 14:16-17. 15:26; 16:7, 12-14).

From these verses of the Gospel of John the following inferences are clearly deducible:

(1) That *Paraclete* or the Comforter or the Spirit of Truth could not come unless Jesus should have departed from the world.

(2) That the Comforter was to abide in the world for ever.

(3) That he was to say many things which Jesus himself could not tell because the world could not then bear them.

(4) That he would guide men unto all truth.

(5) That he would not speak of himself, but whatever he would hear that would he speak.

(6) That the Comforter would glorify Jesus and testify of him.

This description of *Paraclete* or the Comforter or the Spirit of Truth is in complete harmony with the status and mission of the Holy Prophet as given in the Quran:

(1) The Holy Prophet appeared after Jesus had departed from this world.

(2) He is the last Law-giving Prophet and the Quran the last revealed Divine Law for the whole of mankind till the end of time (5:4).

(3) Jesus could not guide mankind to all truth because his Message was meant only for a particular people and for a particular period. And the

Law as amended and given to the Jews by him was not and could not be a complete and perfect Law because they had not yet mentally and morally so developed as to be the bearers of a complete Shari'ah and the world had to wait till it was given a perfect Law in the form of the Quran (5:4) and a Prophet par excellence i.e. the Holy Prophet who could guide all mankind.

(4) The Holy Prophet gave to the world a Law complete in all its details which alone could guide mankind unto all truth (5:4).

(5) The Holy Prophet did not speak of himself but whatever he heard from God that did he speak (53:4).

(6) The Holy Prophet glorified Jesus (2:254; 3:56).

The prophecy in the Gospel of John resembles the prophecy mentioned in the verse under comment except that instead of Aḥmad the name stated therein is *Paraclete*. Christian writers challenge the correctness of the Quranic version of the prophecy, basing their contention on this difference of names, irrespective of the otherwise similar features of Biblical & Quranic versions.

In fact, Jesus spoke Aramaic and Hebrew. Aramaic was his mother tongue and Hebrew his religious language. The present Biblical version is the translation of Aramaic and Hebrew into Greek.

A translation naturally cannot fully convey the beauty of the text. Languages have their limitations. The same is true of the people who speak them. Their limitations are reflected in their works. The Greek language has another word, i.e. *Periklutos*, with

a similar meaning as Aḥmad in Arabic. Jack Finegan, the renowned theologian, in his book, "The Archaeology of World Religions," says:

"Where in Greek the word Comforter (*Parakletos*) is very similar to the word for 'renowned' (*Periklutos*), the latter being the meaning of the names Aḥmad & Muḥammad."

Moreover, "The Damascus Document" a scripture discovered towards the end of the nineteenth century in Ezra synagogue, Old Cairo (p. 2. lines 12, 13) describes Jesus as having foretold the advent of a "Holy Spirit," named *Emeth*.

ويود يعيم بيد مشيحو روح قد شوو هوا ائمة و بفروش
شمو شمو تيهم

i.e. And by His Messiah, He has made them know His Holy Spirit. For it is He who is *Emeth* i.e. "The Truthful One", and in accordance with His name are also theirs.

"*Emeth*" in Hebrew means "the Truth," or "the Truthful one and a person of constant goodness" (Strachan's Fourth Gospel, page 141). The word was interpreted by the Jews as "God's Seal." Naturally, though Jesus must have used the name Aḥmad, the phonetic resemblance of the two words (Aḥmad & *Emeth*) caused later writers to substitute "*Emeth*" for Aḥmad, its Hebrew synonym.

Thus the prophecy mentioned in the verse under comment applies to the Holy Prophet, but as a corollary it may also apply to the Promised Messiah, Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement, since in his person the Second Manifestation of the Holy Prophet took place. To this Second Manifestation or Second Coming of

8. "But who does greater wrong than one who forges a lie against Allah while he is called to Islam? Allah guides not the wrongdoing people. **4227**

9. ^bThey desire to extinguish the light of Allah with *the breath* of their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light, however much the disbelievers hate it. **4228**

10. ^cHe it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ
الْكَذِبَ وَهُوَ يُدْعَىٰ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ^ط

وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ^٨

يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ

وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ^٩

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ

الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ

^a6:22; 10:18; 11:19. ^b9:32. ^c9:33; 48:29.

the Holy Prophet, the third verse of the next *Sūrah*—Al-Jumu‘ah pointedly refers.

It may be mentioned here that a prophecy about the Holy Prophet is also clearly stated in Gospel of Barnabas which is treated by the Church as apocryphal but which has as much claim to be accepted as authentic as any of the four Gospels.

4227. Commentary:

The preceding verse having been applied to the Holy Prophet, the expression "who can be more unjust than one who forges a lie against Allah while he is called to Islam" would refer to those Rejecters of Truth to whom he addressed his Message, since he was the Inviter (داعي) and they the invitees (20:109 & 33:47), and having rejected his Message and by intentionally misinterpreting divine prophecies

they belonged to that class of people who in the Quran have been called forgers of lies against God (6:138-141). But if the prophecy be taken to apply to the Promised Messiah the expression, "he is called to Islam," would signify that the Promised Messiah would be invited by the so-called defenders of Islam to recant, repent and be a Muslim like them, for, according to them, by his claim to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi he would cease to be one.

4228. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet has been repeatedly called the "Light of Allah," in the Quran (4:175; 5:17; 64:9). All the efforts of the enemies of Islam to extinguish this divine light has signally failed and Islam has gone on from strength to strength and will one day embrace in its fold the major enlightened part of all mankind.

all religions, even if those who associate partners *with God* hate it.⁴²²⁹

ع

الْمُشْرِكُونَ ٥

R. 2.

11. O ye who believe! shall I point out to you a bargain that will save you from a painful punishment?⁴²³⁰

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ
تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ٥١

12. "That you believe in Allah and His Messenger, and strive in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your persons. That is better for you, if you did but know."⁴²³¹

تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ
ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ٥٢

13. He will forgive you your sins, and make you enter the Gardens through which streams flow, and pure and pleasant dwellings in Gardens of

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلْكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَسْكِنَ
طَيِّبَةٍ فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ ٥٣ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ

^a9:20, 41.

4229. Commentary:

Most commentators of the Quran are agreed that this verse applies to the Promised Messiah in whose time all religions will make their appearance and the superiority of Islam over all of them will be established.

This and the previous verse contain two very challenging prophecies, the present one about the establishment of the superiority of Islam over other Faiths and the preceding one about the total failure of the enemies of Islam to extinguish its light.

4230. Commentary:

This verse seems to refer to the

time of the Promised Messiah when trade and commerce will flourish and there will be a mad rush for striking profitable bargains.

4231. Commentary:

The reference in the verse again seems to be to the present time—the era of the Promised Messiah, in which, in the absence of religious wars, monetary sacrifice is given precedence over other forms of sacrifice. The present is the time for propagation of Islamic principles and ideals for which money, more than anything else, is urgently needed. The two verses (11, 12) equally are of general application.

Eternity^a. That is the supreme triumph.⁴²³²

14. And *He will bestow upon you another favour* which you love: help from Allah and a near victory. So give glad tidings to the believers.

15. O ye who believe! be helpers of Allah, as said Jesus, son of Mary, to *his* disciples, 'Who are my helpers in *the cause of Allah*.' The disciples said, 'We are helpers of Allah^b.' So a party of the children of Israel believed, while a party disbelieved. Then We gave power to those who believed against their enemy, and they became victorious.⁴²³³

الْعَظِيمُ ۝١٣

وَأُخْرَىٰ تَجِبُوهَا ۖ نَصْرٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ ۖ وَبَشِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝١٤

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا أَنْصَارَ اللَّهِ كَمَا قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِحَوَارِيِّنَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ فَأَمَنَّا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ وَكَفَرَتْ طَائِفَةٌ ۚ فَأَيَّدْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَىٰ عَدُوِّهِمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا ظَاهِرِينَ ۝١٥

^a9:72; 19:62; 20:77. ^b3:53; 5:112.

4232. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that Muslims, by preaching Islamic ideals and principles to the world, will prosper and Islam will advance and make progress.

4233. Commentary:

Of the three religious groups among the Jews to whom Jesus preached his Message—the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes—Jesus belonged to the last, while he had not yet been commissioned as a Divine Preacher. The Essenes were a highly religious and righteous people who lived away from the world's hustle and bustle, passing their time in

meditation and prayer and in the service of humanity. It was from these people that most of Jesus's early followers came ("The Dead Sea Community" by Kurt Schubert and "The Crucifixion by an Eye-Witness"). They have been called "Helpers" by Eusephus.

The concluding words of the *Sūrah* are indeed very prophetic. Throughout the ages the followers of Jesus have enjoyed power and precedence over their enemies—the Jews. They have founded and ruled over vast and powerful empires while the Jews have been a dispersed people so much so that "The Wandering Jew" has become a byword.

CHAPTER 62

AL-JUMU‘AH

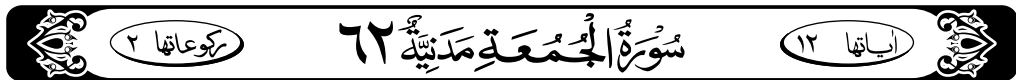
(Revealed after Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūrah* takes its title from v.10, wherein Muslims are enjoined to leave off all business when call is made for the Jumu‘ah Prayer. It is a Medinite *Sūrah* and seems to have been revealed several years after Hijrah (see v. 3). In the previous *Sūrah* Jesus’s prophecy about the advent of the Prophet Aḥmad was mentioned. The present *Sūrah* further deals with that prophecy.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* like its predecessor opens with the glorification of the Might and Wisdom of God, and, as a proof and demonstration of these two Divine attributes, points to the appearance of the Holy Prophet among the unlettered Arabs, who from an unlettered and uncultured people became, through the teaching of the Quran and the Prophet’s noble example, the teachers and leaders for mankind, spreading light and learning wherever they went. The *Sūrah* then refers to the same spiritual phenomenon through a great Deputy of the Holy Prophet—the Promised Messiah—and proceeds to condemn the Jewish people for their rejection of the Holy Prophet, in spite of the fact that their Scriptures abound in prophecies about him. Thus by implication the *Sūrah* warns Muslims against behaving like the Jews, when the Great Deputy appears among them. Towards the close of the *Sūrah* importance of the Friday Prayer is emphasized and an implied hint is made that at the time of the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet which has been likened to the Friday Prayer, there would be a mad craze for trade, commerce, and worldly gains and many other diversions to amuse and turn men away from God, and Muslims are exhorted not to let these things distract them in the midst of their religious duties.



(AL-JUMU'AH)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah,^b the Sovereign, the Holy, the Mighty, the Wise.

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ②

4234

3. He it is Who has raised among the Unlettered *people* a Messenger from among themselves^c who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, although they were before, in manifest misguidance;⁴²³⁵

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ
يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ
لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^bSee 61:2. ^c3:165; 7:158; 9:128.

4234. Commentary:

The verse speaks of four Divine attributes which specially concern the fourfold mission of the Holy Prophet, mentioned in the next verse.

4235. Commentary:

For الأُمِّيِّين see 3:76 & 7:158.

The divine mission of the Holy Prophet consisted in the performance of the fourfold sacred duty referred to in the verse under comment. This was the noble task which was to be entrusted to that great Prophet for whose appearance among the unlettered Arabs the Patriarch

Abraham had prayed several thousand years in advance, when in company with his son, Ishmael, he was raising the foundations of the Ka'bah (2:130).

In fact, no Reformer can truly succeed in his mission unless he prepares, by his noble and purifying example, a community of sincere, devoted and righteous followers, whom he teaches the ideals and principles of his Message and their philosophy, significance and importance, and then sends them out to preach that Message to other people. The training he imparts to

4. And *among* others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise.⁴²³⁶

وَأَخْرَيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ ۖ وَهُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝٤

5. That is Allah's grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases; and Allah is the Lord of immense grace.⁴²³⁷

ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ
ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝٥

6. The likeness of those who were entrusted with the *law of*

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ

them refines their intellect, and the philosophy of his teaching engenders in them certainty of faith, and his noble example creates in them purity of heart and refines character. It is to this basic fact of religion that the verse under comment refers.

4236. Commentary:

The verse signifies that the Message of the Holy Prophet was meant not only for the Arabs among whom he was raised but for all non-Arabs as well, and not only for his contemporaries but also for the coming generations till the end of time. Or the meaning may be that the Holy Prophet will be raised among another people who have not yet joined his immediate followers. The reference in the verse and in a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet is to the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet in the person of the Promised Messiah in the latter days. Says Abū Hurairah: "One Day we were sitting with the Holy Prophet when *Sūrah Jumu'ah* was revealed. I asked the Holy Prophet, "Who are the people to whom the words *And among others*

from among them who have not yet joined them, refer. Salmān the Persian was sitting among us. Upon my repeatedly asking him the same question, the Prophet put his hand on Salmān and said, "If Faith were to go up to the Pleiades, a man from these would surely find it" (Bukhārī). This ḥadīth shows that the verse applies to a man of Persian descent. Now, the Promised Messiah, the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement, was of Persian descent. Other sayings of the Holy Prophet speak of the appearance of the Messiah at a time when there would remain nothing of the Quran but its words and of Islam but its name i.e. the true spirit of Islamic teaching will be lost (Baihaqī). Thus the Quran and Ḥadīth both seem to agree that the present verse refers to the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet in the person of the Promised Messiah.

4237. Commentary:

The verse refers to the good fortune of the people among whom the Holy Prophet^{sa} will be raised for the second time in the person of one of his

Torah, but did not carry out its commandments, is as the likeness of an ass carrying a load of books. Evil is the likeness of the people who reject the Signs of Allah. And Allah guides not the wrongdoing people.⁴²³⁸

7. Say, 'O ye who are Jews, if you claim you are the friends of Allah to the exclusion of all other people, then wish for Death, if indeed you are truthful^a.'⁴²³⁹

8. ^bBut they will never wish for it, because of that which their hands have sent on before them. And Allah knows well those who do wrong.⁴²⁴⁰

9. Say, 'The Death from which you flee will surely overtake

لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ
أَسْفَارًا^ط بِئْسَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ^ط وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ^①

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا إِنْ زَعَمْتُمْ
أَنْكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ مِنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ
فَتَمَنَّوْا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ^②

وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ^ط
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ^③

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ

^a2:95. ^b2:96.

followers—the Promised Messiah.

4238. Important Words:

سفر (books) is the plural of أسفار (sifrun) which is derived from سفر (safara). They say سفر الكتاب i.e. he wrote the book means, a book; a large book; a writing (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse contains an implied warning to Muslims not to reject the Promised Messiah like the Jews before them who had rejected the Holy Prophet.

4239. Commentary:

The verse shows that the Promised Messiah will challenge the Muslim ulema who will reject his claim to مباحلة i.e. a prayer contest in which Divine curse is invoked against those who forge lies against God (3:62).

4240. Commentary:

The reference in the verse seems to be to those Muslim ulema whom the Promised Messiah will invite to Mubāhalah. Being convinced of the falsity of their position the ulema will refuse to accept the challenge.

you.^a Then will you be returned unto Him Who knows the unseen and the seen, and He will inform you of what you had been doing.'

R. 2.

10. O ye who believe! when the call is made for Prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off *all* business. That is better for you, if you only knew.⁴²⁴¹

11. And when the Prayer is finished, then disperse in the land and seek of Allah's grace, and remember Allah much, that you may prosper^b.⁴²⁴²

مَلَقِيكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ
وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَمِنْ بَيْنِكُمْ يَمُوتُ تَمْثَلُونَ ٩

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ
مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ
وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ۚ ذِكُّكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ١٠

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ
وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُونَ ١١

^a2:97; 4:79; 33:17. ^b3:192; 4:104; 8:46.

4241. Commentary:

In the previous verses mention was made of the Jews who rejected the Holy Prophet's Message and who profaned their Sabbath and consequently incurred God's displeasure. In the present verse, however, Muslims have been enjoined to be particularly careful about the obligatory Friday Prayer. Every people has a Sabbath and the Muslim Sabbath is Friday. As soon as call for Prayer is made all business is to cease and the Faithful should attend the mosque to listen to the Imam's sermon (*khutbah*), which

usually deals with some topical subject concerning the moral and social needs of the community and how to fulfil them.

As the *Sūrah* seems particularly to deal with the time of the Promised Messiah, the call for Friday Prayer may also signify his clarion call to Muslims to listen to his Message.

4242. Commentary:

Unlike Jewish or Christian Sabbath, the Muslim Sabbath is not a day of rest. Before the Friday Prayer and after it Muslims are exhorted to follow their daily avocations. The

12. But when they see some merchandise or amusement, they break up for it, and leave thee standing. Say, 'That which is with Allah is better than amusement and merchandise, and Allah is the Best Provider.'

4243

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا انْفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا
وَتَرَكَوكَ قَائِمًا ۖ قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ
مِّنَ اللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ
الرَّزَاقِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

words "of Allah's grace," have generally been understood to mean "doing business and earning one's livelihood."

4243. Commentary:

It is apparent from v. 3, that the *Sūrah*, particularly deals with the time of the Promised Messiah whose advent has been referred to as the advent of the Holy Prophet himself. The verse under comment shows that in the Messiah's time trade and

commerce will engross people's attention and they will have little time to give to God Whom they will consign to complete oblivion. To add to man's forgetfulness of God, there will be all sorts of amusements, sports and pastimes to divert his attention from God. Muslims have been admonished in the verse not to neglect their spiritual well-being in the pursuit of material gains and sensuous pleasures.

CHAPTER 63

AL-MUNĀFIQŪN

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūrah* takes its name from the opening verse. It is a Medinite *Sūrah*, having been revealed, as its subject matter shows, sometime after the Battle of Uḥud which exposed the hypocrites. Whereas the previous *Sūrah* had specifically dealt with the Jews of Medina, this *Sūrah* deals with other enemies of Islam—the hypocrites.

At the very outset the *Sūrah* exposes the infidelity and dishonesty of the hypocrites and condemns their loud profession of faith as false and treacherous. They are, says the *Sūrah*, the real enemies of Islam, as they try to deceive Muslims by their oaths and by their false profession of faith using them as a screen for that purpose. The *Sūrah* further says that by their evil designs and nefarious activities the hypocrites have condemned themselves beyond redemption. They have gone so far in mischief that God will not forgive them. They mistakenly think that, perhaps, like themselves, the Companions of the Holy Prophet are a band of self-seekers who will leave their Leader the moment their material interests so demanded. The *Sūrah* closes with the exhortation to Muslims that instead of seeking to get any material benefit from the Holy Prophet, as the hypocrites foolishly think, they should spend their wealth in the cause of God, before the time comes when Islam will no longer stand in need of the wealth of its followers.



(AL-MUNĀFIQŪN)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the Hypocrites come to thee, they say, 'We bear witness that thou art indeed the Messenger of Allah.' And Allah knows that thou art indeed His Messenger, but Allah bears witness that the hypocrites are certainly liars.⁴²⁴⁴

إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَكَاذِبُونَ ②

3. They have made their oaths a shield; thus they turn *men* away from the way of Allah.^b Surely, evil is that which they have been doing.⁴²⁴⁵

اتَّخَذُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ③

4. That is because they *first* believed (and), then disbelieved.^c So a seal was set upon their hearts and *consequently* they understand not.⁴²⁴⁶

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا فَطَغَبَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b9:9. ^c3:91; 4:138; 16:107.

4244. Commentary:

It is characteristic of a hypocrite that he makes loud profession of his faith and thus seeks to conceal the treachery and infidelity of his heart.

4245. Commentary:

The hypocrites make loud professions of their faith and repeatedly declare on solemn oaths that they are sincere believers. This

they do in order to hoodwink honest and unsuspecting believers into thinking that they are sincere and faithful followers of Islam like themselves, and thus by winning the believers' confidence they seek to create mischief among them. This is how they make their oaths a screen for their wicked designs.

4246. Commentary:

The hypocrites, the verse purports

5. And when thou seest them, their figures please thee;^a and if they speak, thou listenest to their speech. *They are as though they were blocks of wood propped up.* They think that every cry is against them. They are the enemy, so beware of them. Allah's curse be upon them! How are they being turned away from the truth!⁴²⁴⁷

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ تُعْجِبُكَ أَجْسَامُهُمْ
وَإِنْ يَقُولُوا تَسْمَعُ لِقَوْلِهِمْ^ط كَأَنَّهُمْ
خَشَبٌ مُسْتَدَدٌ^ط يَحْسَبُونَ كُلَّ صَيْحَةٍ
عَلَيْهِمْ^ط هُمُ الْعَدُوُّ فَاحْذَرُهُمْ^ط
قُلْ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ^ط أَلَىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ^٥

6. And when it is said to them, 'Come,^b that the Messenger of Allah may ask forgiveness for you,' they turn their heads aside, and thou seest them keeping back while they are big with pride.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ لَوْؤَالَهُمْ^ط وَرَأَوْهُمْ وَرَأَيْتَهُمْ
يَصُدُّونَ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ^٦

^a2:205. ^b4:62.

to say, appear to have lost all reason and understanding since they labour under the misconception that by their wiles and glib talk they can deceive Allah and His Prophet.

4247. Important Words:

مسندة (propped up) is derived from سند. They say سند اليه i.e. he leaned, rested or stayed himself against it or upon it. سند في الجبل means, he ascended the mountain. سندا (sannada) means, he set up pieces of wood as stays or props against a wall; he wore or clad himself with garments called سند (sanadun). The word also means, a thing upon or against which one leans, rests or stays himself, or a

person upon whom one leans; mountain slope (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In this verse the hypocrites have been compared to blocks of wood propped up, or pieces of wood dressed up with clothes, which signifies that a hypocrite lacks self-reliance. He is always in search of some person or thing upon which to rest or lean. Or the word may signify that his interior does not correspond to his exterior. He so conducts himself that while outwardly he appears to be a reasonable, dignified and honest person, inwardly he is quite hollow and rotten to the core.

7. It is equal to them whether thou ask forgiveness for them or ask not forgiveness for them.^a Allah will never forgive them. Surely, Allah guides not the rebellious people. **4248**

8. They it is who say, 'Spend not on those who are with the Messenger of Allah that they may disperse *and leave him*,' while to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth; but the Hypocrites understand not. **4249**

9. They say, 'If we return to Medinah, the one most exalted will surely drive out therefrom the one most mean,' while *true* honour belongs to Allah and to

سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَسْتَغْفَرْتَ لَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ
تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ ۚ لَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ ۚ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٧﴾

هُمُ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ لَا تُنْفِقُوا عَلَى مَنْ
عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ حَتَّى يَنْفَضُوا ۚ وَاللَّهُ
خَزَائِنُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَكِنَّ
الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٨﴾

يَقُولُونَ لَئِنْ رَجَعْنَا إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ
لَيُخْرِجَنَّ الْأَعَزُّ مِنْهَا الْأَذَلَّ ۚ وَاللَّهُ
الْعَزِيزُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ

^a9:80.

He seeks to please with his glib talk but, being a coward, he suspects danger in every crisis.

4248. Commentary:

The hypocrites are the real enemies of Islam, much worse than the disbelievers (v. 5). By their secret wicked designs and machinations against Islam they irretrievably condemn themselves. As they have no faith, the verse says, asking forgiveness for them cannot benefit them in any way.

4249. Commentary:

Insincere and dishonest himself, a

hypocrite considers others to be like him. The verse points out that the hypocrites of Medina had made an entirely foolish and wrong estimate of the sincerity of purpose of the Holy Prophet's Companions. They had quite a wrong notion that the Companions of the Holy Prophet had gathered round him from considerations of material interest, and that the moment they would find that their hopes had not materialised, they would desert him. Time completely belied their fond and futile expectations.

His Messenger and the believers; but the Hypocrites know not.⁴²⁵⁰

ع
١٣

الْمُنْفِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ^٤

R. 2.

10. O ye who believe! let not your wealth and your children divert^a you from the remembrance of Allah. And whoever does so—it is they who are the losers.⁴²⁵¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ^{١٠}

11. ^bAnd spend out of that with which We have provided you before death comes upon one of you and he says, ‘My Lord! if only Thou wouldst grant me respite for a little while,^c then I

وَأَنْفِقُوا مِنْ مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ ۚ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُنْ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ^{١١}

^a8:29; 24:38; 64:16; 102:2. ^b2:196; 9:34. ^c14:45.

4250. Commentary:

In the course of a campaign, (probably the one against Banū Muṣṭaliq) ‘Abdullāh bin Ubayy, leader of the hypocrites of Medina, is reported to have said that on his return he, "the most honourable of the inhabitants of Medina," would drive out therefrom "the meanest of them," meaning thereby that he would drive out of Medina the Holy Prophet, along with the entire band of his followers. ‘Abdullāh bin Ubayy was bitterly hostile to the Holy Prophet because his hopes of becoming the Chief of Medina were shattered by the Holy Prophet’s arrival on the scene. ‘Abdullāh’s son heard of this

vile boast of his father, and as the party returned to Medina, he drew his sword and barred his father’s entry into the town till he had confessed and declared that he himself was the meanest of the citizens of Medina and the Holy Prophet the most honourable of them. Thus his boast recoiled on his own head.

4251. Commentary:

The believers have been informed in this and the next verse that God demands from them the sacrifice of their wealth and offsprings in the cause of Truth, since it is sacrifice that distinguishes true believers from the hypocrites.

would give alms and be among the righteous.’⁴²⁵²

12. ^aAnd Allah will not grant respite to a soul when its appointed time has come; and Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴²⁵³

وَلَنْ يُؤَخِّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا ۚ
وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

^a71:5.

4252. Commentary:

The verse exhorts believers to make the best of their opportunities to serve the cause of truth with all the gifts that God had bestowed upon them, before death comes upon them i.e. before they lose the opportunity or the power to serve.

4253. Commentary:

The word ^{أجل} signifies a Divine decree, and the verse means that a people should make the best of their opportunities before the Divine decree comes into force; that is, because they will have outlived their usefulness, they would deserve to live no more.

CHAPTER 64

AT-TAGHĀBUN

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Date of Revelation and Context

As its contents show this *Sūrah* was revealed at Medina. The time of revelation appears to be shortly after Hijrah. It takes its name from v. 10.

The previous *Sūrah* had closed on an exhortation to believers to spend liberally in the cause of truth, out of what Allah had bestowed upon them, before it was too late and the day arrived when they would have to render an account of their deeds and actions to God. In this *Sūrah* some description is given of the awful day, called the Day of Losing and Gaining. The believers are exhorted again with greater emphasis not to allow any considerations of ties of relationship to stand in the way of their resolve to spend their wealth in Allah's way.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with the declaration that the whole creation proclaims the glory and greatness of God, to whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and Who has power over all things. He created man and brought into existence the whole universe for his service and endowed him with great natural powers and faculties in order that he should achieve the object of his creation. Unfortunately, however, the disbelievers defy God's commandments and reject His Messengers, with the result that they incur Divine displeasure. They are told that they should make preparation for the Day when the loss resulting from disobedience of heavenly Messengers will be brought home to them. Towards the end of the *Sūrah* believers are told that they can make up for any remissness in the discharge of their obligations to God and man, by giving full obedience to the commandments of God and the behests of His Messenger, and by spending in the cause of Truth, out of the great gifts God has bestowed upon them, and that they should not allow any ties of relationship to stand in their way.



(AT-TAGHĀBUN)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bWhatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah; His is the kingdom and His is the praise, and He has power over all things. ⁴²⁵⁴

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ②

3. It is He Who has created you, but *some* of you are disbelievers and *some* of you are believers; and Allah sees what you do. ⁴²⁵⁵

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ فَمِنْكُمْ كَافِرٌ وَمِنْكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ③

4. He created the heavens and the earth with truth, and He shaped you^c and made your shapes beautiful, and to Him is the *ultimate* return. ⁴²⁵⁶

خَلَقَ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ
وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُورَكُمْ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b17:45; 24:42; 59:25; 61:2; 62:2. ^c3:7; 7:12.

4254. Commentary:

Every creature by discharging its allotted task punctually and regularly and thus fulfilling the object for which it has been created, declares God to be free from every defect, imperfection or impurity and to be its Master, Creator and Controller. See also 57:2.

4255. Commentary:

God has provided to all men adequate powers and opportunities

for moral and spiritual development but some of them, by their failure to make proper use of those opportunities, practically refuse to acknowledge God's beneficence and disobey His laws and commandments, while others by employing them in the service of their fellow beings succeed in winning His pleasure.

4256. Commentary:

The universe is governed and controlled by fixed natural laws and

5. He knows whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and He knows what you conceal and what you disclose^a; and Allah knows well that which is *hidden* in the breasts.⁴²⁵⁷

6.^bHas not the story reached you of those who disbelieved before? So they tasted the evil *consequences* of their conduct, and they had a painful punishment.⁴²⁵⁸

7. That was because their Messengers came to them with manifest Signs, but they said, 'Shall *mere* mortals guide us?' So they disbelieved and turned away, but Allah had no need of *them*; and Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.

4259

يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ
مَا تُسْرُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ۖ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
بِدَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ۝

أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَبُؤُا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ
قَبْلُ ۚ فَذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُ كَانَتْ تَأْتِيهِمْ رُسُلُهُمْ
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرٌ يَهْدُونَنَا
فَكَفَرُوا وَتَوَلَّوْا وَاسْتَغْنَى اللَّهُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ
غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ۝

^a2:78; 16:20; 27:26. ^b40:22-23.

man is not the victim of chance, but being the crown and acme of the whole creation he has been endowed with such powers and faculties as are suited to his position as God's vicegerent on earth: and because of these powers he will have to render to God an account of his deeds and actions.

4257. Commentary:

As man has to render an account of his actions to God, he must realise that God being the Creator and

Controller of the universe, nothing is hidden from Him or can escape His notice. It is therefore futile on man's part to think that he can avoid or escape responsibility for his actions.

4258. Commentary:

See next verse.

4259. Commentary:

As man has been endowed with great faculties of head and heart and as he has to render an account of his deeds in the life hereafter, God sent

8. Those who disbelieve assert that they will not be raised up.^a Say, 'Yea, by my Lord, you shall surely be raised up; then shall you surely be informed of what you did. And that is easy for Allah.'**4260**

9. Believe, therefore, in Allah and His Messenger, and in the Light which We have sent down.^b And Allah is Well-Aware of all that you do.**4261**

10. The day when He shall gather you, on the Day of Gathering, that will be the day of mutual loss *and gain*. And whoso believes in Allah and acts righteously—He will remove from them the evil *consequences* of their deeds^c and He will make them enter Gardens through which streams flow, to

زَعَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ نَنْ يُبْعَثُوا ۖ قُلْ
بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤُنَّ بِمَا
عَمِلْتُمْ ۖ وَذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ۝۸

فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي
أَنْزَلْنَا ۖ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝۹

يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُكُمْ لِيَوْمِ الْجَمْعِ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ
التَّغَابُنِ ۖ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ
صَالِحًا يُكْفِّرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُدْخِلْهُ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۖ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ
الْعَظِيمُ ۝۱۰

^a36:79-80; 46:18; 50:4. ^b4:175; 7:158. ^c8:30; 48:6; 66:9.

His Messengers to guide him to the goal of his life. But man, in his ingratitude and conceit, defies and opposes Divine Messengers, thereby incurring Divine punishment.

4260. Commentary:

Does man think (the verse seems to say) that there is no future life or that he has been endowed with great powers, attributes and faculties for nothing, or, does he imagine that he can escape responsibility for his

actions? He is sadly mistaken if he so imagines. There is a life after death wherein "shall you surely be informed of what you did."

4261. Commentary:

النور (the Light) may mean, the light of revelation, or the wisdom, spiritual enlightenment and insight, and divine knowledge and discernment, with which the Holy Prophet was specially gifted.

abide therein for ever. That is the supreme triumph.⁴²⁶²

11. *“But as to those who disbelieve and reject Our Signs, these shall be the inmates of the Fire, wherein they shall abide; and an evil destination it is!*

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ^{١١}

R. 2.

12. There befalls not any affliction but by the leave of Allah.^b And whosoever believes in Allah—He guides his heart *aright*. And Allah knows all things well.⁴²⁶³

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُّصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ
وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ^{١٢}

13. And obey Allah and obey the Messenger.^c But if you turn

وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَاطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ^{١٣} فَإِنْ

^a2:40; 7:37; 22:58; 30:17; 78:29. ^b4:79. ^c5:93; 24:55.

4262. Important Words:

التغابن (mutual gain and loss) is derived from غبن. They say غبنه i.e. he deprived, cheated or made him suffer loss in selling or overcame him in buying and selling. غبن رأيه (ghabina) means, he was or became deficient in his opinion or judgement. غبن الشيء means, he was unmindful or neglectful of the thing. In view of the root meaning of the word, the expression يوم التغابن has been variously interpreted as: (1) The Day of mutual gain and loss i.e. when believers will know what they had gained and disbelievers what they had lost. (2) The Day of the Manifestation of Loss i.e. people will realize how far they had been deficient in the discharge of their duties to God and

man and thus their loss will become manifest. (3) The Day when the inmates of Paradise will over-reach the inmates of Hell by the state of enjoyment in which the former will be and the punishment which the latter will experience. (4) The Day when believers will attribute defect or deficiency to the lack of wisdom of disbelievers in that they had preferred disbelief to belief (Lane, Mufradāt & Aqrab).

4263. Commentary:

God controls the universe according to certain laws. When man contravenes any of these laws, he involves himself in trouble. But as God is the Creator of all natural laws and man's affliction is due to the contradiction of one or other of these

away, then Our Messenger is responsible only for the clear conveying of the Message. **4264**

14. Allah! there is no God but He; so in Allah let the believers put their trust.

15. O ye who believe! surely among your wives and your children are *some who are* your enemies, so beware of them. And if you overlook and forgive and pardon, then surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful. **4265**

16. Verily, your wealth and your children are a trial^a; but with Allah is an immense reward.

17. So fear Allah as best you can, and listen, and obey, and spend *in His cause*; it will be good for yourselves.^b And whoso

تَوَيْتُمْ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَىٰ رَسُولِنَا الْبَلْغُ
الْمُبِينُ ۝١٣

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝١٤

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ
وَأَوْلَادِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَّكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُمْ ۚ
وَإِنْ تَعَفَوْا وَتَصَفَحُوا وَتَغْفِرُوا فَإِنَّ
اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝١٥

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ ۚ
وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝١٦

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَاسْمَعُوا
وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا لِّأَنْفُسِكُمْ ۚ

^a8:29; 63:10. ^b59:10.

laws or to one of God's special decrees, the trouble may be said to have emanated from Him or to have come into being by His leave.

4264. Commentary:

The best way to avoid being involved in miseries and misfortunes is to obey Allah and His Messenger—the laws of the Sharī'ah and divine natural laws, because man's troubles, as mentioned in the preceding *Sūrah*, stem from the contravention of

these laws.

4265. Commentary:

Whereas in the previous verses emphasis was laid on obedience to Allah and His Messenger, the present verse draws attention to the necessity of guarding against some of the things that militate against that obedience—our love for our near and dear ones. If we allow them to stand in the way of our loyalty to God and submission to Divine laws, they

is rid of the covetousness of his own soul—it is they who shall be successful.⁴²⁶⁶

وَمَنْ يُؤْكَلْ شُحُّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18. ^aIf you lend to Allah a goodly loan, He will multiply it for you, and will forgive you; and Allah is Most Appreciating, Forbearing.⁴²⁶⁷

إِنْ تُقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُّضْعِفْهُ
لَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۖ وَاللَّهُ شَكُورٌ
حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

19. ^bThe Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Wise.

عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٩﴾

^a2:246; 57:12; 73:21. ^b6:74; 9:94; 13:10; 59:23.

become our enemies whom we should specially guard against.

4266. Commentary:

In the preceding verse believers were told that their wealth and their children would put their mettle to test, whether they would help in promoting the cause of Truth or would prove an impediment or hindrance. In the verse under comment they are told that they should obey all the commandments of

the Sharī‘ah, particularly they should not be hesitant when they are called upon to make monetary sacrifice for the advancement of a good cause. Only that way lies success and prosperity.

4267. Commentary:

Spending one’s wealth in the cause of God is tantamount to giving a loan to Him which the Bountiful and Appreciating God pays back manifold.

CHAPTER 65

AT-TALĀQ

(Revealed after Hijrah)

Date of Revelation and Context

The *Sūrah* derives its title from the subject matter of the opening verse. It was revealed at Medina, sometime in the 5th or 6th year of Hijrah. The immediate cause of its revelation seems to be the divorce pronounced by ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar against his wife during her monthly course, a procedure which the *Sūrah* is intended to prohibit (Bukhārī).

In the preceding *Sūrah* a note of warning was sounded against some of the wives and children of believers, as sometimes they tend to become an impediment in the way of men wishing to make monetary sacrifice in the cause of truth. This may possibly lead to estrangement between the husband and the wife and ultimately to divorce, or the divorce may result from incompatibility of dispositions or from some other cause. It was therefore necessary to lay down the correct procedure for divorce. This may be regarded as the immediate connection of this *Sūrah* with its predecessor. But there also runs a deeper connection in the subject matter of the Quran as a whole. It is characteristic of the style of the Quran that when any of its *Sūrah* deals with a particular subject in its opening verses, then in order to emphasize and impress the importance of that subject upon the mind of the reader, the *Sūrah*, briefly but pointedly reverts to the same subject in its closing verses. The same procedure has been adopted in the Quran as regards whole *Sūrahs*. Thus some of the social and political problems which have been dealt with in detail in the opening Medinite *Sūrahs* such as Al-Baqarah, Āl-e-‘Imrān, An-Nisā’, have again been briefly treated in the last ten Medinite *Sūrahs*. The subject of divorce with which this *Sūrah* briefly deals has already been dealt with in detail in *Sūrah* Al-Baqarah.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with the procedure to be adopted when a man intends to divorce his wife, and with the treatment to be extended to her after the divorce has been pronounced and she is waiting for her ‘*iddah*’ (period of waiting) to expire. It is enjoined that during this period she should be treated well and provided with all the necessities, commensurate with the financial resources of the husband. It is significant that four times in the course of five brief verses of the *Sūrah* believers have been exhorted to observe fear of God in their dealings. This indicates that in the matter of divorce husbands are generally tempted to treat their divorced wives unjustly. Hence the injunction to observe fear of God.

From the subject of divorce the *Sūrah* passes on to the subject of rejection of the Divine Message by disbelievers. There seems to exist a subtle connection between the two. Those who reject the Divine Message divorce themselves from the grace of God.



(AT-TALĀQ)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. O Prophet! when you divorce women, divorce them for the *prescribed* period,^b and reckon the period; and fear Allah. Turn them not out of their houses, nor should they *themselves* leave unless they commit an act which is manifestly foul. And these are the limits *set* by Allah; and whoso transgresses the limits of Allah, he indeed wrongs his own soul.^c Thou knowest not; it may be that thereafter Allah will bring something new to pass.⁴²⁶⁸

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ
فَطَلَّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ لَا تُخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِنْ
بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ
بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبِينَةٍ ۖ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ
وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ
نَفْسَهُ ۖ لَا تَدْرِي لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ
بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ أَمْرًا ①

^aSee 1:1. ^b2:232-233. ^c2:230.

4268. Commentary:

This is one of those verses of the Quran in which the address made to the Holy Prophet, is, in reality, meant for the believers. Since the Holy Prophet was debarred from divorcing any of his wives (33:53), the injunction is meant clearly for his followers.

The procedure of divorce given in this *Sūrah* is as follows:

The first pronouncement of divorce should be in the interval between two monthly courses, during which the husband and wife should not have

conjugal relations. This ensures that the decision to divorce has not been taken hastily in a fit of anger or under the influence of some other momentary impulse but after cool and deliberate reflection. Moreover, a divorced wife is to remain in her house till the expiry of 'iddah (the period of waiting) which extends over three courses.

The words "it may be that thereafter Allah will bring about something new to pass," signify that the above-mentioned procedure is enjoined because it is possible that during the period of waiting the causes of

3. Then, ^awhen they are about to reach their *prescribed* term, keep them with kindness, or put them away with kindness, and call to witness two just persons from among you; and bear *true* witness for Allah. This is admonished he who believes in Allah and the Last Day. And he who fears Allah—He will make for him a way out, **4269**

4. And will provide for him from whence he expects not. And he who puts his trust in Allah—He is sufficient for him. Verily, Allah will accomplish His purpose. For everything has Allah appointed a measure. **4270**

5. And if you are in doubt *as to the prescribed period* for such of your women as have despaired of monthly courses, then *know that* the prescribed

فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ
بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ
وَأَشْهَدُوا ذَوَىٰ عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا
الشَّهَادَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَن كَانَ
يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ
اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۖ

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَن
يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ ۚ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
قَدْرًا ۝٤

وَالَّذِي يَدِينُ مِنَ الْمُحِيضِ مِنْ نِّسَائِكُمْ
إِنْ ارْتَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْهُرٍ ۚ وَالَّذِي
لَمْ يَحِضْنَ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِ الْأَحْمَالُ

^a2:232.

friction may wear out and reconciliation may take place between the estranged parties.

4269. Commentary:

The two witnesses referred to in the verse are to be called when the wife is about to be divorced, or when and if she is taken back by her husband. See also 2:230-234. "A way out" may mean a way out of the difficult situation in which both the wife and

the husband are placed by their apparently irreconcilable differences.

4270. Commentary:

The verse means that if differences between husband and wife are due to the poverty of the husband, God will provide for him from sources he never could imagine, provided he fears Allah and honestly wishes to tide over the difficult situation.

period for them is three months, and the *same is for* such as do not have their monthly courses yet. And *as for those* who are with child, their period shall be until they are delivered of their burden.^a And whoso fears Allah, He will provide facilities for him in his affair.⁴²⁷¹

6. That is the command of Allah which He has sent down to you. And whoso fears Allah—He will remove the evil *consequences* of his deeds and will enlarge his reward.⁴²⁷²

7. Lodge *divorced women during the prescribed period* in the houses wherein you dwell, according to *the best of* your means; and harass them not that you may create hardships for them. And if they be with child, spend on them until they are delivered of their burden.^b And

أَجَلُهُنَّ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ ۖ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ يُسْرًا ۝

ذَٰلِكَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ أَنْزَلَهُ إِلَيْكُمْ ۖ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَكْفِرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُعْظِمْ لَهُ أَجْرًا ۝

أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنْتُمْ مِنْ وَجْدِكُمْ وَلَا تُضَارُّوهُنَّ لِتُضَيِّقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ ۖ وَإِنْ كُنَّ أُولَاتٍ حَمْلٍ فَأَنْفِقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ حَتَّى يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ أَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَاتُّوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ ۚ

^a2:229. ^b2:234.

4271. Commentary:

The words "if you are in doubt" have been added because the stoppage of monthly course may be due to some disorder in the womb or to some other cause, though menopause may not yet have arrived.

4272. Commentary:

In the brief space of five verses the

believers have been enjoined to fear God. This shows that in the matter of divorce men may be generally tempted to deal unjustly with their divorced wives and thus deprive them of their just rights. It was in the fitness of things that they should have been warned against falling a victim to this temptation.

if they give suck *to the child for you*, give them their due recompense, and consult together in kindness; but if you meet with difficulty from each other, then another woman shall suckle *the child* for him (the father).⁴²⁷³

8. ^aLet him who has abundance spend out of his abundance. And let him whose means of subsistence are straitened spend out of what Allah has given him. Allah burdens not any soul beyond that which He has bestowed upon it. Allah will soon bring about ease after hardship.

R. 2.

9. ^bHow many a city rebelled against the command of its Lord and His Messengers, and We called it to severe account, and punished it with dire punishment!⁴²⁷⁴

وَأْتِمِرُوا بَيْنَكُمْ بِمَعْرُوفٍ ۚ وَإِنْ تَعَاَسَرْتُمْ فَسْتَزِضْ لَهُ أُخْرَى ۖ

لِيُنْفِقَ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّنْ سَعَتِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا آتَاهَا ۚ سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا ۝

وَكَأَيِّن مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ عَتَتْ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهِ فَحَاسَبْنَاهَا حِسَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ وَعَذَّبْنَاهَا عَذَابًا تُنْكِرًا ۝

^a2:234. ^b7:5-6; 17:18; 21:12; 22:46.

4273. Important Words:

وجد كم (your best means) is derived from وجد which means, he found or he got. The three forms of the word وجد i.e. *wajdun* or *wijdun* or *wujdun* mean the same thing i.e. ampleness of means; capacity; riches or wealth. They say هذا من وجدى i.e. it is within my capacity. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In this verse all the possible needs

of a divorced woman have been adequately met. In her *'iddah* a divorced woman is to be looked after by the husband with the same care and consideration as when she was the mistress of his house, according to the best of his means, till she leaves the house and is free to adopt the way of life she chooses.

4274. Commentary:

From the subject of divorce the

10. So it tasted the evil consequences of its conduct, and the end of its affair was ruin.⁴²⁷⁵

فَذَاقَتْ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهَا وَكَانَ عَاقِبَةُ
أَمْرِهَا خُسْرًا ⑩

11. Allah has prepared for them a severe punishment; so fear Allah, O ye men of understanding, who have believed. ^aAllah has indeed sent down to you a Reminder—

أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ^{وَالَّذِينَ لَا}
قَدْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكُمْ ذِكْرًا ⑪

12. A Messenger, who recites unto you the clear Signs of Allah, that he may bring those who believe and do good deeds out of every *kind of* darkness into light.^b And whoso believes in Allah and does good deeds— He will make him enter Gardens, through which rivers flow, to abide therein for ever. Allah has indeed made excellent provision for him.

رَسُولًا يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ مُبَيِّنَاتٍ
لِّيُخْرِجَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ
بِاللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
أَبَدًا ⑫ قَدْ أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ لَهُ رِزْقًا ⑬

^a15:10; 36:70. ^b2:258; 5:17; 14:6.

verse makes a subtle diversion to the subject of defiance of God and His Messengers. In fact, in religious phraseology a woman is described as standing in the same relation to her husband as do the followers of a Prophet in relation to the Prophet. This comparison between the two relationships has been made quite clear in the last verse of *Sūrah At-Taḥrīm*, where disbelievers have been compared to the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot, and believers of different

grades of righteousness and spirituality to the wife of Pharaoh, and to Mary, mother of Jesus.

4275. Important Words:

وبال (evil consequences) is derived from وبل. They say وبل فلانا i.e. he beat such a one harshly and with consecutive strokes. وبلت السماء means, the rain fell in torrents. وبل الصيد means, he chased the hunt. وبال means, injury, damage; harshness; vexation; sin; punishment of sin. وويل means, dangerous, pernicious violent (Aqrah).

13. Allah is He Who created seven heavens, and of the earth the like thereof.^a The *divine* command comes down in their midst, that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah encompasses all things in *His* knowledge. **4276**

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ وَمِنَ
الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ ۖ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ
لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ۚ

^a67:4; 71:16.

4276. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that God's decree works in heavens and earth to the effect that His Messengers and their righteous followers are blessed with a divine light which guides them in their affairs and leads them to success and prosperity, while disbelievers suffer the evil consequences of their rejection of the Divine Message. In the preceding two verses a pointed

reference is made to this subject.

"Seven earths" may be the seven major planets of the solar system and seven heavens their orbits or ways as elsewhere so called in the Quran (23:18). Or spiritually speaking "seven heavens" may signify seven stages of the spiritual development of man and "seven earths" those of his physical growth. For a detailed discussion of this subject, see 23:1-18.

CHAPTER 66

AT-TAḤRĪM

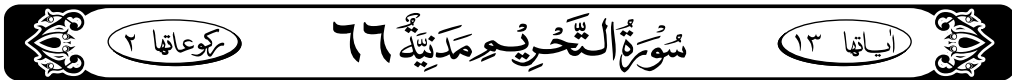
(Revealed after Hijrah)

General Remarks

With this chapter ends the series of Medinite *Sūrah*s which began with *Sūrah* Al-Ḥadīd. Its revelation may be assigned to the 7th or 8th year of Hijrah and of a part of it to a later period, as the incident mentioned therein shows. The preceding *Sūrah* had dealt with some aspects of *Ṭalāq*—permanent separation between husband and wife. The present *Sūrah*, however, deals with the subject of temporary separation, that is to say, with cases wherein a man, due to disagreement or conflict in domestic affairs temporarily gives up conjugal relations with his wife—or swears not to benefit from a lawful practice. The *Sūrah* takes its title from the opening verse.

Summary of Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with an injunction addressed personally to the Holy Prophet not to forbid himself the use of things which God has made lawful for him. The specific incident referred to in the opening verse indicates that due to misunderstanding, disagreement that may disturb, though temporarily, domestic harmony and peace, might sometimes arise in the otherwise most peaceful atmosphere of even a Prophet's household. The injunction, which applies to the Holy Prophet as much as to his followers, signifies that in such a case of temporary disharmony extreme measures should not be resorted to. The Holy Prophet's wives are further warned that they should never lose sight of the Prophet's very exalted status as God's Messenger and should not make demands from him which are inconsistent with his high station. The *Sūrah* proceeds to tell believers to take care that members of their household do not deviate from the path of rectitude lest they might land themselves in trouble, and that if they happen to err or falter they should make proper amends and repent truly and sincerely, so that they might deserve Divine grace and mercy. As the *Sūrah* opens with the mention of an incident concerning relationship of the Holy Prophet with his wives, it ends fittingly with a simile, comparing disbelievers to the wives of Prophets Noah and Lot, and believers to the wife of Pharaoh and to the pious and righteous Mary, mother of Jesus.



(AT-TAḤRĪM)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. ⁴²⁷⁷

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. O Prophet! why dost thou forbid *thyself* that which Allah has made lawful to thee. Thou seekest the pleasure of thy wives? And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful. ⁴²⁷⁸

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ ۚ
تَبْتَغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَاجِكَ ۖ وَاللَّهُ
عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ②

^aSee 1:1.

4277. Commentary:

See 1:1.

4278. Commentary:

It is related that one day one of the wives of the Holy Prophet gave him a drink made from honey, which he seemed to like. Some of his other wives, out of pique, pointed out to him that his breath smelt of *Maghāfir*, a shrub the taste of which resembled that of honey but having a bad smell. The Holy Prophet, because of his delicate nature, promised not to take honey any more (Buldān). It is to this incident that the verse under comment is generally taken to refer. But it seems improbable that the Holy Prophet, merely to satisfy the pique of his wife or wives, should have taken such a drastic step as to have forbidden himself the use of something which was lawful, particularly that in which, according to the Quran, "there is cure for men" (16:70). It appears the narrator or narrators of this incident in the traditions suffered

from some misunderstanding or confusion, particularly when, according to one tradition, the Holy Prophet took honey from the house of Zainab, and it were 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah who contrived to draw him into making the aforesaid promise, while, according to another tradition, it was at the house of Ḥafṣah that he was served with honey and that the wives who objected were 'Ā'ishah, Zainab and Ṣafiyya. It appears, moreover, that according to the ḥadīth, two, or at the most three, of the Holy Prophet's wives were concerned in the incident, but, according to vv. 2 & 6 of the present *Sūrah*, all were connected with it, two of them taking a leading part (v.5). These considerations indicate that the *Sūrah* refers to some incident of much greater significance than the mere taking of honey by the Holy Prophet at the house of one of his wives and of having been drawn into making a promise not to take it anymore. In the commentary on this

Sūrah, Bukhārī (*Kitābul-Maẓālim wal Ghaṣb*) quotes Ibn ‘Abbās as relating that he was always on the lookout to enquire of ‘Umar as to who were the two wives to whom reference had been made in the verse: "Now, if you two turn unto Allah, it will be better for you, and your hearts are already so inclined." One day, finding ‘Umar alone, he sought to satisfy his curiosity. He had hardly finished his question, says Ibn ‘Abbās, when ‘Umar said that they were ‘Ā’ishah and Ḥafṣah and then proceeded to relate the story: "Once, when my wife offered me her advice concerning some domestic affair, I curtly told her that it was no business of hers to advise me, for in those days we did not hold our womenfolk in much respect. My wife sternly replied: 'Your daughter Ḥafṣah takes so much liberty with the Holy Prophet that she retorts back, when he says something not to her liking till he feels offended, and you do not allow me to speak to you even about our domestic affairs.' Upon this I went to Ḥafṣah and sternly told her that she should not be misled by ‘Ā’ishah in this matter as she was nearer to the Prophet’s heart. Then I went to Ummi Salma and had hardly broached the matter with her when she also curtly told me not to interfere in affairs concerning the Prophet and his wives. A short time after this, the Prophet separated himself from his wives and decided not to go to the house of any of them. The news went round that the Prophet had divorced his wives. I went to him and asked him if it was true that he had divorced his wives to

which he replied in the negative." This incident shows that ‘Umar, and Ibn ‘Abbās were of the view that the relevant verses of the *Sūrah* referred to this temporary separation of the Holy Prophet from his wives. The fact that the preceding *Sūrah* mentions the subject of *Ṭalāq* which is separation of a permanent character, lends weight to the inference that these verses relate to the Prophet’s separation from his wives, which, however, was of a temporary nature. Besides, as reported by ‘Ā’ishah in the above mentioned ḥadīth, immediately after the period of separation was over, v. 33:29 was revealed, and the Prophet’s wives were given the choice between the Prophet’s companionship and a life of poverty and austere simplicity on the one hand, and separation from him with a life of ease and comfort and all sorts of material benefit on the other. The choice was given to all the wives and the verse under comment speaks of *all* the wives, as also does v. 4. This shows that the incident referred to in these verses concerns all the wives in which two of them took a more prominent part. And this was when the Prophet’s wives, led by ‘Ā’ishah and Ḥafṣah, demanded of him that like other Muslim women they should also have amenities of life and comfortable living (Fatḥul-Qadīr). In this context the words *تبتغي مرضاة أزواجك* would seem to mean something like this: "Since thou always desirest to please thy wives and meet their wishes, they have been encouraged by this loving attitude of thine naturally to lose sight of thy

3. Allah has indeed allowed to you the dissolution of your oaths, and Allah is your Friend; and He is All-Knowing, Wise.

4279

4. And when the Prophet confided a matter unto one of his wives and she then divulged it, and Allah informed him of it he made known *to her* part thereof, and avoided *mentioning* part *of it*. And when he informed her of it, she said, 'Who has informed thee of it?' He said, 'The All-Knowing, the All-Aware *God* has informed me.' 4280

قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ ۚ
وَاللَّهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

وَإِذْ أَسْرَ النَّبِيُّ إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ أَزْوَاجِهِ
حَدِيثًا ۖ فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَتْ بِهِ وَأَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ عَرَّفَ بَعْضُهُ وَأَعْرَضَ عَنْ
بَعْضٍ ۚ فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَهَا بِهِ قَالَتْ مَنْ أَنْبَاكَ
هَذَا ۖ قَالَ نَبَّأَنِيَ الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ۝

high position as a Prophet of God and to make excessive demands on thee."

The alleged incident of Mariah, the Copt, being too foolish and fantastic a concoction of Christian writers and lacking all reliable historical evidence, does not merit serious notice. Mary was the Holy Prophet's wedded consort and the respected mother of the Faithful. The Prophet never kept a slave girl.

4279. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet had severely taken to heart his wives' demand for amenities of life, and in order to show his extreme displeasure had sworn to keep away from them for one month. The verse under comment prescribes that a lawful thing does not become unlawful to a person merely by his

swearing not to use it. In such a contingency he is required only to expiate his broken oath.

4280. Commentary:

It is difficult to say to what particular incident the present verse in fact refers. The reference which seems to be supported by the context may be to the incident described by 'Ā'ishah herself, which is to this effect: When verse 33:29 was revealed, giving the Holy Prophet's wives a choice between his companionship and separation from him, by way of a reply to their demand for a life of comfort and ease, the Prophet first of all, broached the matter with 'Ā'ishah (Bukhārī, *Kitābul-Mazālim wal Ghaṣb*). The Holy Prophet appears to have taken

5. Now if you two turn unto Allah repentant, *it will be better for you*, and your hearts are *already so* inclined. But if you back up each other against him, surely Allah is his Helper and Gabriel and the righteous among the believers; and furthermore, angels *too* are *his* helpers.⁴²⁸¹

إِنْ تَتُوبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا
وَإِنْ تَظْهَرَا عَلَيْهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَاهُ
وَجِبْرِيلُ وَصَالِحُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ
بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ ظَهِيرٌ ۝

6. It may be that, if he divorce you, his Lord will give him instead wives better than you—resigned, believing, obedient, always turning to God, devout in worship, given to fasting, *both* widows and virgins.⁴²⁸²

عَسَى رَبُّهُ إِنْ طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَهُ
أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا مِنْكُنَّ مُسْلِمَاتٍ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ
قَنِيتٍ تَبَتَّ عِدَّتٍ سَاحِتٍ ثَبَّتِ
وَأَبْكَارًا ۝

that course because it was ‘Ā’ishah who had led the demand along with Ḥafṣah, and it is not unlikely that ‘Ā’ishah passed on the Holy Prophet’s secret communication to Ḥafṣah. Whatever the actual facts may be, the verse emphasizes the obligation of a person to whom a secret is confided not to divulge it, particularly when the parties concerned are husband and wife and the secret relates to a private domestic affair; or for that matter when they are a Prophet of God and one of his followers.

4281. Commentary:

The words "you two," seem to refer to ‘Ā’ishah and Ḥafṣah who led the demand for worldly comforts in their homes. All the wives of the Holy Prophet had, however, joined in the

demand, though the leading part was taken by these two, and this, perhaps because they were daughters respectively of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, the two most respected among the Holy Prophet’s Companions. See also v. 2 above.

The phraseology of the verse indicates that the matter referred to in these verses was of a very serious nature, but taking honey from the house of one’s wife evidently is not so serious an affair as to have led to separation of the Holy Prophet from all his wives for nearly a month. Nor was the reprimand to the Prophet’s wives implied in the words "Allah is his Helper and Gabriel and believers..." called for.

4282. Important Words:

سَاحِت (given to fasting) is feminine

7. O ye who believe! save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones,^a over which are appointed angels, stern and severe, who disobey not Allah in what He commands them and do as they are commanded.⁴²⁸³

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ
وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ
وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَظٌ شِدَادٌ
لَّا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ
مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٧﴾

8. ^bO ye who disbelieve! make no excuses this day. You are requited for what you did.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ
إِنَّمَا تُجْرُونَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

R. 2.

9. O ye who believe! turn to Allah in sincere repentance. It may be that your Lord will remove the evil consequences of your deeds and make you enter Gardens through which

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تَوْبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً
نَصُوحًا ۖ عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ يُكَفِّرَ عَنْكُمْ
سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ

^a2:25. ^b9:66. 77:37.

of سائحون which is plural of سائح which is act. part. from سَاح. They say سَاحَ فِي الْأَرْضِ i.e. he went through the land for the purpose of devoting himself to religious services. سائح means, one who (1) goes through the land as a devotee; or forsakes his home for the sake of God; (2) who observes the obligatory fasts; (3) one who fasts constantly (Lane & Aqrab).

ثيبات (widows) is the plural of ثيب which is derived from ثاب. They say ثَبَّتِ الْمَرْأَةُ i.e. the woman became a ثيب which means. (1) a woman who has become separated from her husband by his death or by being divorced by him; (2) one who is not a virgin; (3) a

woman to whom a man has gone in; (4) a man who has gone in to a woman; (5) a person who has married, whether man or woman; (6) a woman who has attained the age of puberty, though a virgin. رَجُلٌ ثَيْبٌ means a man who has been married to a woman (Lane & Aqrab.)

4283. Commentary:

As the *Sūrah* deals particularly with domestic disagreements and conflicts, believers are enjoined to train and educate members of their household in such a way that there should reign complete harmony, peace and concord in the house as it prevails in Paradise.

rivers flow,^a on the day when Allah will not abase the Prophet nor those who have believed with him. Their light will run before them and on their right hands. They will say, 'Our Lord, perfect our light for us and forgive us; surely, Thou hast power over all things.'⁴²⁸⁴

10. O Prophet! strive hard against the disbelievers and the Hypocrites; and be strict against

تَحْتَهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَا يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّ
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَى بَيْنَ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
آتِمِّمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا إِنَّكَ عَلَى
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ①

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ
وَاعْلِظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ٢ وَمَا لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ ٣

^a8:30; 48:6; 64:10.

4284. Commentary:

The never-ceasing desire for perfection on the part of believers in Paradise as expressed in the words, "Our Lord perfect our light for us," shows that life in Paradise will not be a life of inaction. On the contrary, spiritual advance in Paradise will know no end, for as the believers will attain excellence, characteristic of a certain stage, they will not stop at that, but seeing in front of it a higher stage of excellence and thus finding that the stage at which they had arrived was not the highest stage, will desire the attainment of the next higher stage, and so on without end.

In short the believers will go on making advancement in Paradise and shall never recede a step. Their activity far from ceasing will rather increase. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that in Paradise

the believers will be imparted knowledge of new attributes of God which they will try to copy in themselves.

From the verse it further appears that after entering Paradise, the believers will seek *maghfirah*, i.e. "suppression of a defect." In this sense of *maghfirah* the verse means that the righteous will be continually praying to God for the attainment of perfection and complete immersion in divine light. They will be continually going upwards and will regard each state as defective in comparison with a higher one to which they will aspire and will, therefore, pray to God to suppress the defective state that they may be able to get to the higher one. This is the true significance of *Istighfār* of which the literal meaning is, "asking forgiveness for one's lapses."

them, their resort is Hell, and an evil destination it is!⁴²⁸⁵

11. Allah sets forth for those who disbelieve the example of the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were under two righteous servants of Ours, but they acted unfaithfully towards them. So they availed them naught against Allah, and it was said *to them*, 'Enter the Fire, ye twain, along with those who enter.'

12. And Allah sets forth for those who believe the example of the wife of Pharaoh when she said, 'My Lord! build for me a house with Thee in the Garden; and deliver me from Pharaoh and his work, and deliver me from the wrongdoing people;'

13. And *the example of Mary*, the daughter of 'Imrān, who guarded her chastity^a—so We breathed therein of Our Spirit—and she fulfilled *in her person*

وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ^{١١}

ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا امْرَأَتَ
نُوحَ وَامْرَأَتَ لُوطٍ ۚ كَانَتَا تَحْتَ
عَبْدَيْنِ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا صَالِحَيْنِ فَخَانَتْهُمَا
فَلَمْ يُغْنِيا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَقِيلَ
ادْخُلَا النَّارَ مَعَ الدَّٰخِلِينَ^{١٢}

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا امْرَأَتَ
فِرْعَوْنَ ۖ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ
بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَعَمَلِهِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ^{١٣}

وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرَانَ الَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ
فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِنَا
وَصَدَقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتِبَ عَلَيْهَا

^a21:92.

4285. Commentary:

Whereas, in the preceding verse it was stated that spiritual progress, not only in this world but in the life after death, is endless, in the verse under comment we are told that no advance is possible unless the disbelievers and the hypocrites are strenuously striven

against. Incidentally, the verse explains the real significance of jihad which means, "striving against". Since the hypocrites were regarded as part of the Muslim Community, jihad in the sense of fighting with the sword was never waged against them.

the words of her Lord and His
Books and was one of the
obedient.⁴²⁸⁶

مِنَ الْقَتِيلِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

4286. Commentary:

In this and the preceding two verses, examples of the wives of the Prophets Noah and Lot, of the wife of Pharaoh, and the example of Mary, the mother of Jesus, are set forth. The disbelievers are compared to the wives of Noah and Lot in order to show that the companionship of a righteous man, even of a Prophet of God, does not benefit an evilly minded person who is bent upon rejecting truth. Prophet Noah's wife was of a more wicked disposition than the wife of Lot since the latter only preferred the company of her relatives to that of Lot, while Noah's son, probably under the corrupting influence of his mother, had rejected

his father's Message. The wife of Pharaoh stands for those believers who, though passionately desiring and praying to get rid of sin, yet cannot fully dissociate themselves from evil influences, represented by Pharaoh, and having arrived at the stage of the self-accusing soul (النفس اللوامة) sometimes fail and falter. Mary, the mother of Jesus, represents those righteous servants of God, who having closed all avenues of sin and having made peace with God, are blessed with Divine inspiration; the pronoun (masculine gender) in فيه standing for such fortunate believers. Or, the pronoun may stand for فج which, literally meaning a cleft or fissure, signifies an opening through which sin can find access.

CHAPTER 67

AL-MULK

(Revealed before Hijrah)

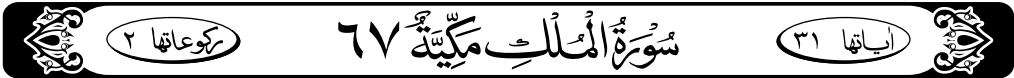
General Remarks

With this chapter begins a series of *Sūrahs*, extending to the end of the Quran, which were revealed before Hijrah, with the solitary exception of *Sūrah* An-Naṣr which, though belonging to the Medinite period, was actually revealed at Mecca on the occasion of the Holy Prophet's last Pilgrimage. The whole of the Quran is God's own revealed Word and so is simply inimitable and inapproachable in subject matter, style and diction, but the *Sūrahs* revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Prophet's Call possess a majesty and grandeur, all their own. The beauty of rhythm and the charm of cadence of the revelation of this period are beyond human power adequately to describe. As these *Sūrahs* generally deal with matters of belief and doctrine, e.g. prophecies about the great and glorious future of Islam, existence of God and His attributes, Revelation, Resurrection, and Life after death, much symbolism has necessarily been used to describe the mystical and the spiritual in terms of what we can perceive by our physical senses. The *Sūrah* belongs to the middle Meccan period—8th year of the Call being the approximate time when, according to competent authorities the *Sūrah* was revealed.

Subject Matter

As stated above, the Meccan *Sūrahs* generally deal with matters of belief. The present *Sūrah*, being the first of this series, naturally opens with proclaiming the Lordship, the Sovereignty, and the Almightyness of God, and as proof of these attributes adduces the fact that God is the Creator of life and death, and of the whole universe through whose component parts, from the smallest atom to the largest planet, there runs a wonderful and flawless design and arrangement. The creation of the universe and the beautiful order that pervades the cosmos, are proofs positive of the fact that God *is* and that He has created man to serve a sublime object and to achieve a noble goal. But man in his ingratitude has always rejected God's Message and consequently has been incurring Divine punishment.

The *Sūrah* then proceeds to recount the manifold Divine blessings and favours without which man cannot exist for a single moment; it, then, by implication, calls upon him to make proper use of them for the realization of the purpose for which he is created. The *Sūrah* closes with a beautiful homily, thereby bringing home to man the supreme truth that just as no physical life can exist without water, so spiritual life needs for its sustenance the heavenly water of Divine revelation.



(AL-MULK)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.⁴²⁸⁷

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bBlessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things;⁴²⁸⁸

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ②

3. Who has created death and life that He might try you^c— which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving.⁴²⁸⁹

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ③ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b25:2-3. ^c5:49; 6:166; 11:8; 18:8.

4287. Commentary:

See 1:1.

4288. Commentary:

The *Sūrah* was revealed at Mecca when Islam was yet in its infancy and its enemies were straining every nerve to nip it in the bud. It opens with the mention of Divine attributes which are expressive of God's Power, Might and Majesty, and, appropriately the verse under comment implies a prophecy that the poor, persecuted and helpless Muslims would soon be granted the kingdom, not only of Arabia but of vast lands beyond its confines.

4289. Commentary:

The law of life and death works in all nature. Every living creature is subject to decay and death. Nations, like individuals, are subject to this inexorable law. The implication of the verse seems to be that with the advent

of Islam God's decree has come into operation, that is to say that some nations will receive new life and others will decay and fall. This will show that God is Mighty. The linking together of the attribute "Most Forgiving" with the attribute "Mighty" may imply that when Islam will triumph the enemies of the new Faith will be at the mercy of the Holy Prophet who will forgive them. The prophecy was fulfilled in the Fall of Mecca.

"Death", as in vv. 2:29 and 53:45, has been mentioned in this verse before "life." The reason seems to be that death or non-existence, is the state before life, or perhaps because "death" is more important and is of greater significance than "life," because, it opens to man the portals of everlasting life and unending spiritual progress, while his life on earth is only a temporary sojourn and

4. Who has created seven heavens in grades.^a No incongruity canst thou see in the creation of the Gracious God. Then look again: Seest thou any flaw?⁴²⁹⁰

5. Aye, look again, and yet again, thy sight will *only* return unto thee confused and fatigued.⁴²⁹¹

الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۚ مَا تَرَىٰ
فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَوُّتٍ ۚ فَارْجِعِ
الْبَصَرَ ۚ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ ۝

ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ
الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ ۝

^a65:13; 67:4; 71:16.

a preparation for a permanent and everlasting life beyond the grave.

4290. Important Words:

طباقاً (in grades) is derived from طبق. They say أطبق الثوب i.e. he folded together the piece of cloth. طبق means, a thing that is the equal of another thing in its measure so that it covers the whole extent of the latter like the lid; a layer of the earth; a fold; a generation; any of the stages of heaven. السماوات طباق means, the heavens are composed of stages, one above another (Lane & Aqrab).

تفاوت (incongruity) is derived from فأت. They say تفاوت الشئتان i.e. the two things were distinct or were different. تفاوت means, defect, fault, or imperfection; incongruity or discordance (Lane & Aqrab).

فطور (flaw) is derived from فطر. They say فطره i.e. God created it or brought it into existence for the first time, it not having existed before. انفطر means, it became split, rent or cleft. فطور means, cleft; flaw; disorder (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Wonderful indeed is God's creation. The solar system of which our earth is but a small member is vast, varied and orderly and yet this system is but one of hundreds of millions of systems, some of which are incalculably larger than it, yet the countless millions of suns and stars are so arranged and distributed in relation to one another as to produce everywhere harmony and beauty. The order that covers and pervades the universe is obvious to the ordinary naked eye, and is spread far beyond the range of disciplined vision, assisted by all the instruments and appliances which science and art have been able to invent (Flint).

4291. Important Words:

خاسئاً (confused) is derived from خاسأ which means, he was or became vile, despised and hated. خاسأ الرجل الكلب means, the man drove away the dog. خاسأ البصر means, the eyesight became dazzled or confused and dim. خاسيء when applied to a dog or a swine

6. And verily, We have adorned the lowest heaven^a with lamps, and We have made them *the means of driving away satans*,^b and We have prepared for them the punishment of the blazing Fire.⁴²⁹²

وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ
وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا
لَهُمْ عَذَابَ السَّعِيرِ ①

7. And for those who disbelieve in their Lord there is the punishment of Hell, and an evil resort it is!⁴²⁹³

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ
وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ⑦

8. When they are cast therein, they will hear it roaring as it boils up.^c ⁴²⁹⁴

إِذَا أُلْقُوا فِيهَا سَمِعُوا لَهَا شَهِيقًا وَهِيَ
تَفُورُ ⑧

9. It would almost burst with fury. ^dWhenever a host of wrongdoers is cast into it the wardens thereof will ask them, 'Did no Warner come to you?'

تَكَادُ تَمَيَّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ⑥ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا
فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ
نَذِيرٌ ⑨

^a15:17; 37:7; 41:13; 50:7. ^b15:18; 37:11. ^c11:107; 21:101; 25:13. ^d6:131; 39:72; 40:51.

means, driven away and repelled, and when applied to a man means, contemptible, despicable, vile or confused; and when applied to the eyesight means, dazzled or confused and dim (Lane).

4292. Commentary:

For a detailed note on the subject, briefly stated in this verse, see 15:17-19.

The word السماء (heaven) may also signify the spiritual firmament and مصابيح (lamps) Divinely inspired teachers and Reformers and شياطين may mean satanic people.

4293. Commentary:

When Divine Reformers appear in the world to remove distortions and interpolations that find their way into heavenly teachings, those who reject Divine Reformers deserve and get God's punishment. This is mentioned by implication also in the preceding verse.

4294. Important Words:

شهِيق (roaring) signifies the ending or final part of the crying or braying of an ass. It also signifies a high sound; a cry of distress (Lane). See also 11:107.

10. They will say, “Yea, verily, a Warner did come to us, but we treated *him* as a liar, and we said: ‘Allah has not revealed anything; you are but in manifest error.’”

قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَاءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا
وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنَّا أَنْتُمْ
إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ كَبِيرٍ ⑩

11. And they will say,^a ‘Had we but listened or possessed sense, we should not have been among the inmates of the blazing Fire.’

وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا
فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ⑪

12. Thus will they confess their sins; but far away are the inmates of the blazing Fire *from God’s mercy*.⁴²⁹⁵

فَاعْتَرَفُوا بِذَنبِهِمْ فَسُحْقًا لِأَصْحَابِ
السَّعِيرِ ⑫

13. ^bVerily, those who fear their Lord in secret—for them is forgiveness and a great reward.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ لَهُمْ
مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ⑬

14. ^cAnd whether you conceal what you say or say it openly, He knows well what is in *your* breasts.

وَأَسِرُّوا قَوْلَكُمْ أَوِ اجْهَرُوا بِهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ
عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ⑭

15. Does He Who has created *you* not know *it*? He is the Knower of all subtleties, the All-Aware.

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ ۖ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ
الْخَبِيرُ ⑮

R. 2.

16. He it is Who has made the earth even and smooth for you;^d

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا

^a25:28. ^b21:50; 55:47; 79:41-42. ^c2:78; 6:4; 11:6; 20:8. ^d2:23; 20:54.

4295. Important Words:

سحقا (be far away) is derived from سحق which means, it was or became distant or remote. سحقه means, he bruised or powdered or pulverized it;

he destroyed it. سحق means, powdered, pulverized; distant, remote. سحق means, remoteness, curse; destruction (Lane & Aqrab).

so walk in the spacious sides thereof, and eat of His provision. And unto Him will be the resurrection.⁴²⁹⁶

فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِهِ
وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ ﴿١٦﴾

17. "Do you feel secure from Him Who is in the heaven that He will not cause the earth to sink with you when lo! it begins to shake?⁴²⁹⁷

أَمْ أَمِنْتُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يَخْسِفَ بِكُمْ
الْأَرْضَ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ ﴿١٧﴾

18. Do you feel secure from Him Who is in the heaven that He will not send against you a sandstorm? Then will you know how *terrible* was My warning.

أَمْ أَمِنْتُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ
عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا ۖ فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ كَيْفَ
نَذِيرِ ﴿١٨﴾

19. And indeed those before them also treated My *Messengers* as liars; then how *grievous* was My punishment!

وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَكَيْفَ
كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾

20. ^bHave they not seen the birds above them, spreading out their wings without moving *them* and then drawing *them* in

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ فَوْقَهُمْ صَفًّا
وَيَقْبِضْنَ ۚ مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا

^a6:66; 16:46; 17:69; 34:10. ^b16:80.

4296. Commentary:

Journeying in the earth is recommended again and again in the Quran, because leaving one's home and travelling to other lands and countries helps to add to one's knowledge and experience.

The verse also recommends making full use of mountains, which may also signify entertaining high ambitions and lofty aspirations, as the word *منكب* which also means a lofty

place, suggests.

4297. Commentary:

It is because punishment is generally spoken of in the Quran as coming down from heaven that God is referred to, here and in the next verse, as being in heaven; otherwise God is here, there and everywhere. "He is in the heaven and He is in the earth and He is where man is, even nearer to him than his jugular vein" (43:85; 50:17 & 57:4).

to swoop down upon the prey? None withholds them but the Gracious God. Verily, He sees all things well.⁴²⁹⁸

21. Or who is he that can be an army for you to help you against the Gracious God? The disbelievers are only in deception.⁴²⁹⁹

22. Or who is he that will provide for you,^a if He should withhold His provision? Nay, but they obstinately persist in rebellion and aversion.⁴³⁰⁰

23. What! is he who walks grovelling upon his face better guided or he who walks upright on the straight path?⁴³⁰¹

الرَّحْمَنُ إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

أَمَّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ جُنْدٌ لَّكُمْ يَنْصُرُكُمْ
مِّنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنِ الْكَافِرُونَ إِلَّا
فِي غُرُورٍ ﴿٢١﴾

أَمَّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي يَرْزُقُكُمْ إِنْ أَمْسَكَ
رِزْقَهُ بَلْ لَّجُوا فِي عُتُوٍّ وَنُفُورٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

أَفَمَنْ يَمْشِي مُكِبًّا عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ أَهْدَىٰ
أَمَّنْ يَمْشِي سَوِيًّا عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ
مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

^a10:32; 34:25.

4298. Commentary:

The verse as the context shows, refers to Divine punishment that is in store for disbelievers. It purports to say that if they continue to oppose truth, they will be destroyed by famines, earthquakes and particularly by wars, and the birds of the skies will feast on their dead bodies. The Merciful God grants them respite that they might accept the Heavenly Message and save themselves from Divine punishment. See also 16:80.

4299. Commentary:

The verse warns disbelievers that if on account of their persistent

rejection of the Divine Message and opposition to, and persecution of, the believers they (believers) were allowed to take up arms against them, their armies will be entirely helpless against Heavenly forces that would come to the help of believers.

4300. Commentary:

The reference may be to the terrible famine that held Mecca in its grip for several years till the Meccans begged the Holy Prophet to pray for their deliverance from the scourge. See also 44:13.

4301. Commentary:

The verse means that disbelievers

24. Say, 'He it is Who brought you into being, and made for you ears and ^aeyes and hearts; *but* little thanks do you give.'

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25. Say, ^b'He it is Who multiplied you in the earth, and unto Him will you be gathered.'

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26. ^c'And they say, 'When will this promise *come to pass*, if *indeed* you are truthful?'

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27. Say, 'The knowledge of it is with Allah, and I am only a plain Warner.'^d

28. ^e'But when they see it nigh, the faces of those who disbelieve

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ
السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۖ قَلِيلًا مَّا
تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ
تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ
صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا
نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ زُلْفَةً سَيِّئَتْ وُجُوهُ الَّذِينَ

^a16:79; 23:79. ^b23:80. ^c21:39; 34:30; 36:49. ^d22:50; 26:116; 29:51. ^e21:40.

walk on the wrong path, hanging down their heads and grovelling in the darkness of doubt and disbelief, while believers, in the certainty of faith, go straight on the path of truth, holding their head high. Can the two be equal?

4302. Commentary:

Disbelievers are told that God has given them eyes to see so that they might benefit from the signs He has shown in support of truth. He has given them ears to listen to the Divine Message. He has given them powers of mind that they might understand and realize the Divine Message.

People do not make use of these God-given faculties and choose to welter in the quagmire of doubt; شكر (*shukr*) meaning to make proper use of a thing.

4303. Commentary:

Man has been created that he may lead a purposeful life on earth and may achieve the grand object of his creation after which he will have to render an account of his deeds and actions.

4304. Commentary:

"This promise" may refer to the promise of Divine punishment made in 17-22 above.

will become grief-stricken, and it will be said, 'This is what you used to ask for.'⁴³⁰⁵

كَفَرُوا وَقِيلَ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ
تَدْعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29. Say, 'Tell me, if Allah should destroy me and those who are with me, or have mercy on us, who will protect the disbelievers from a painful punishment?'

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَهْلَكَنِى اللَّهُ وَمَنْ مَعِىَ
أَوْ رَحِمَنَا فَمَنْ يُجِىْرِ الْكٰفِرِينَ مِنْ
عَذَابِ اَلِىْمٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

30. Say, 'He is the Gracious God; in Him have we believed and in Him have we put our trust. And you will soon know who is in manifest error.'⁴³⁰⁶

قُلْ هُوَ الرَّحْمٰنُ اٰمَنَّا بِهِ وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا
فَسَتَعْلَمُوْنَ مَنْ هُوَ فِى ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

31. Say, 'Tell me, if *all* your water were to disappear *in the depths of the earth*, who then will bring you *pure* flowing water?'⁴³⁰⁷

قُلْ اَرَأَيْتُمْ اِنْ اَصْبَحَ مَاؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا
فَمَنْ يَّاتِيْكُمْ بِمَآءٍ مُّعِيْنٍ ﴿٣١﴾

4305. Commentary:

It is characteristic of disbelievers that as long as punishment does not overtake them, they boast and brag and hurl jibes and railleries at believers, but when they are face to face with it, they are seized with a sense of extreme frustration, dismay, and dejection.

4306. Commentary:

The Divine attribute الرحمان (the Beneficent) has been repeatedly

mentioned in the *Sūrah* because all the Divine gifts and favours mentioned in it, whether pertaining to man's physical sustenance or his spiritual development, are the direct result of God's beneficence (رحمانية).

4307. Commentary:

All life, whether physical or spiritual depends on water,—the former, on rainwater and the latter on the water of Divine revelation.

CHAPTER 68

AL-QALAM

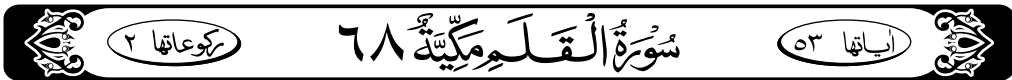
(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

This *Sūrah* is one of the first four or five *Sūrahs* revealed at Mecca in the very beginning of the Call. According to some authorities it was revealed just after *Sūrah* Al-‘Alaq which was the first Quranic *Sūrah* to be revealed, but some other authorities place it after *Sūrahs* Muzzammil and Muddaththir. There is, however, no doubt that all these *Sūrahs* were revealed more or less in consecutive order because there exists a strong likeness in their subject matter. The *Sūrah* takes its title from the opening verse, and deals principally with the Holy Prophet’s claim as a Messenger of God.

Subject Matter

Like the Meccan chapters which mainly deal with matters of doctrine and belief, the present *Sūrah* deals with the truth of the Holy Prophet’s claim, and gives sound and solid arguments in proof of it. After this a large part of the *Sūrah* is devoted to a discussion of the fight of disbelievers against truth, and to the evil end to which they ultimately come, giving reasons why they reject truth and why they strive and struggle against it, and how, when their efforts appear to be on the point of bearing fruit they come to nought, and truth, instead of going under, begins to prosper, prevail and predominate. The *Sūrah* further declares complete frustration and disappointment to be the lot of the disbelievers; they burn in the fire of disgrace and humiliation. Towards the close, the Holy Prophet is enjoined to bear with patience and fortitude all the mockery, opposition, and persecution to which he was subjected, because his cause was bound to succeed.



(AL-QALAM)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the inkstand and *by* the pen and *by* that which they write, ⁴³⁰⁸

ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ ①

3. Thou art not, by the grace of thy Lord, a madman. ^{b4309}

مَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ ②

4. And for thee, most surely, there is an unending reward. ⁴³¹⁰

وَإِنَّ لَكَ لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b34:47; 52:30.

4308. Important Words:

وَ (by), means, I swear; I cite as witness or evidence. For the philosophy and significance of Quranic oaths, see 37:2; 51:2 & 91:2.

Commentary:

In this verse the inkstand, the pen and all the written material is cited as evidence to support and substantiate the statement made in the next three verses.

4309. Commentary:

The verse means that by whatever test of knowledge and learning the claim of the Holy Prophet is examined, he will be found to be not a maniac, as the disbelievers say, but the sanest and the wisest of men. It further says that all other Divine Messengers were also stigmatised as lunatics because, in view of very heavy odds against them and of their own helpless weak position, their claim that despite the great power, prestige and resources of their

opponents they would succeed and their enemies would fail, appeared to the latter to be nothing better than the ravings of a madman. The next verse gives the reason why this charge is not only unfounded but also foolish and fantastic.

4310. Commentary:

This verse, along with the next, exposes the absurdity of the charge of madness. It purports to say that the actions of a madman produce no useful result, but that the Holy Prophet will eminently succeed in fulfilling the object of his Divine mission and in bringing about a wonderful revolution in the lives of his degenerate people. And this revolution will not end with his death. On the contrary, whenever in future his followers will deviate from the path of rectitude, God will raise among them Reformers who will regenerate them and will infuse in them a new life. And this process will continue till the end of time. This is

5. And thou dost surely possess high moral excellences.⁴³¹¹

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ٥

6. And thou wilt soon see and they *too* will see.

فَسَبِّحْهُ وَبِصْرٍ وَبَصْرُ ٦

7. Which of you is afflicted with madness.⁴³¹²

بِأَيِّكُمْ الْمَفْتُونُ ٧

8. Surely, thy Lord knows best those who go astray from His way,^a and He knows best those who follow guidance.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ

سَبِيلِهِ ٨ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ٨

9. So comply not with the wishes of those who reject *the truth*.

فَلَا تَطِيعِ الْمَكْذِبِينَ ٩

10. ^bThey wish that thou shouldst be pliant so that they may *also* be pliant.⁴³¹³

وَدُّوا لَوْ تُدْهِنُ فَيُدْهِنُونَ ١٠

^a16:126; 53:31. ^b17:74; 56:82.

the significance of the words, "and for thee is an unending reward."

4311. Commentary:

This verse constitutes a further eloquent commentary on the charge of madness imputed to the Holy Prophet. It purports to say that the Prophet, not only is not a maniac but is the noblest and sublimest of men possessing in full measure all those moral excellences that combine to make their possessor a perfect image of his Creator. The Holy Prophet's humanity was of the most perfect character. He was a complete embodiment of all good moral qualities that a man is capable of possessing. It is to this aspect of the Holy Prophet's greatness that his talented wife, 'Ā'ishah, referred, when, on being asked to shed some light on the Prophet's habits and

morals she said كان خلقه القرآن i.e. he possessed all those moral excellences which are mentioned in the Quran as the special marks of its true followers (Bukhārī). See also 20:2 & 33:22.

4312. Commentary:

The verse turns tables upon the accusers of the Holy Prophet, and tells them in challenging words that time will show whether it was he or they who suffered from madness, or whether his claim to be God's Messenger was the outpouring of a heated brain, or whether they themselves were so demented as not to read the signs of time and thus refuse to believe in him.

4313. Important Words:

تدھن (thou shouldst be pliant) is derived from دھن which means, he was or became weak. أدهن فلانا means, he

11. And yield thou not to any mean swearer,

وَلَا تُطِيعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿١١﴾

12. "Backbiter, one who goes about slandering, ⁴³¹⁴

هَمَّازٍ مَّشَاءٍ مِّنْمِيمٍ ﴿١٢﴾

13. ^bForbidder of good, transgressor, sinful,

مَّنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿١٣﴾

14. Ill-mannered and, in addition to that, of doubtful birth. ⁴³¹⁵

عُتْلٍ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ زَنِيمٍ ﴿١٤﴾

15. ^cThis is because he possesses riches and children. ⁴³¹⁶

أَن كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

^a49:12; 104:2. ^b50:26. ^c23:56; 74:13-14.

endeavoured to conciliate or make peace with such a one; he treated him with gentleness; he acted towards him with dishonesty or dissimulation; he pretended the contrary of what he concealed in his mind with regard to him; he strove to deceive him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse may have special reference to the offers which the Quraish of Mecca had made to the Holy Prophet in order to tempt him away from his fixed purpose, or it may possess general application, since truth is as firm as rock while falsehood has no legs to stand upon and gives way to pressure or temptation and is ready to make compromises.

4314. Important Words:

نَمِيمٍ (slander) is derived from نَمَى which means, he uttered calumny or excited discord. مَنْمِيمٍ means, mischievous and malicious misrepresentation; calumny, slander (Lane & Aqrab).

4315. Important Words:

عُتْلٍ (ill-mannered) is derived from عَتَلَ (ill-mannered) is derived from عَتَلَ ('atala). عَتَلَهُ means, he dragged him or drove him along roughly. عَتْلٍ means, a great eater who refuses to give; gross, coarse, rough or rude person; low, ignoble; mean (Lane).

زَنِيمٍ (of doubtful birth) is derived from زَنَمَ (zannama) and تَزْنِمُ is conjoining anyone with a people or party to which he does not belong. زَنِيمٍ means, one adopted among a people to whom he does not belong, not being needed by them; base, ignoble, mean; the son of an adulteress or fornicatress (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The reference in this and the three verses preceding it may be to Walīd bin Mughīrah or Abū Jahl, etc. or to every leader of falsehood.

4316. Commentary:

The verse signifies that all sin, vice and opposition to Truth is born of conceit or false pride which are

16. "When Our Signs are recited unto him, he says, 'Stories of the ancients!'

إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

17. We will brand him on the snout.⁴³¹⁷

سَنَسِمُهُ عَلَى الْخُرْطُومِ ﴿١٧﴾

18. We will surely try them as We tried the owners of the garden when they vowed that they would certainly pluck *all* its *fruit* in the morning,⁴³¹⁸

إِنَّا بَلَوْنَاهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا لَيَصْرِمُنَّهَا مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

19. And they made no exception *and said not, 'If God please.'*⁴³¹⁹

وَلَا يَسْتثنُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

^a8:32; 16:25; 83:14.

maladies of one who manages to amass great wealth and who wields great power and influence. Or, the verse, in conjunction with those preceding it, may mean that base and vile man should not be shown consideration or respect, simply because he happens to possess wealth and influence.

4317. Commentary:

As, disbelievers, out of pride and a false sense of power reject the Divine Message, God will disgrace and humiliate them. "Branding on the snout" is a metaphor for disgracing a person.

4318. Commentary:

Here the base, greedy and conceited disbelievers have been compared to the owner of a garden who would devour all its fruit and would not allow any share to those who had also put in their labour in developing the gardens and would defraud them of

their just rights.

4319. Important Words:

يستثنون (made no exception) is derived from *ثنى*. They say *استثناه* i.e. he excluded it or excepted it. *الاستثناء* in the case of an oath means, saying *إنشاء الله* i.e. if God please (Lane).

Commentary:

The owners of the "garden" greedily devoured the fruit of the labour of others and fed fat on it, excluding the latter from sharing it with them. Or, the verse may mean that they spent no part of their wealth for the benefit of their poor brethren. Or, it may signify that they were so sure of the successful outcome of their labours and were so certain of gathering in their harvest without any mishap that they completely forgot God, omitting to seek Divine protection by uttering the words "If God please."

20. "Then a visitation from thy Lord visited it while they were asleep;⁴³²⁰

فَطَافَ عَلَيْهَا طَائِفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. And the morning found it like a garden cut down overnight.⁴³²¹

فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَالصَّرِيمِ ﴿٢١﴾

22. So they called to one another at the break of dawn,

فَتَنَادَوْا مُصْحِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. Saying, 'Go forth early in the morning, to your field, if you would gather the fruit.'

أَبِ اغْدُوا عَلَىٰ حَرْثِكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَرِمِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. And they set out talking to one another in low tones,

فَانْطَلَقُوا وَهُمْ يَتَخَفَتُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. Saying, 'Let no poor man today enter it against your will.'

أَنْ لَا يَدْخُلَهَا الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَسْكِينٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

4322

26. And they went forth early in the morning, determined to be niggardly.⁴³²³

وَعَدُوا عَلَىٰ حَرْدٍ قَدِيرِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

^a3:118; 18:43.

4320. Commentary:

The verse means that Divine punishment overtook the "garden" in a sudden and swift sweep.

4321. Important Words:

الصريم (cut down) is derived from صرم. They say صرمه i.e. he cut it, cut it through or severed it; or he ceased to associate with him. صريم means, cut off, cut through or severed; black land that does not grow anything; night; the dark night or a portion thereof. The words أصبحت كالصريم mean, it became burnt up and black like the night (Lane).

4322. Commentary:

The rich owners of the "garden" in the parable are compared to those selfish, cruel and greedy persons who, besides exploiting the labour of others, are so stingy that they do not spend any part of their ill-gotten gains for the needy and the poor.

4323. Important Words:

حرد (hardun) infinitive noun from حرد (harada) which means, (1) he tended, repaired, or betook himself; (2) he sought, pursued or desired; (3) he prevented, hindered, prohibited, debarred; (4) he separated himself

27. But when they saw it, they said, 'Surely, we have lost *our way!*'

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهَا قَالُوا إِنَّا لَضَالُّونَ ۝٢٧

28. 'Nay, we have been deprived of all *our fruit.*' 4324

بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ ۝٢٨

29. The best among them said, 'Did I not say to you, "Why do you not glorify *God?*" '

قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَّكُمْ لَوْلَا تُسَبِّحُونَ ۝٢٩

30. *Thereupon*, they said, 'Glory be to our Lord. Surely, we have been wrongdoers.'

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ ۝٣٠

31. Then some of them turned to the others, reproaching one another.

فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ يَتَلَوْمُونَ ۝٣١

32. They said, 'Woe to us! We were indeed rebellious *against God.*'

قَالُوا يَوَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا طَٰغِينَ ۝٣٢

33. 'Maybe, *if we repent*, our Lord will give us instead a better *garden* than this; we do humbly entreat our Lord.' 4325

عَسَىٰ رَبَّنَا أَن يُبَدِّلَنَا خَيْرَ مِمَّا إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا رَاغِبُونَ ۝٣٣

from others or he forsook his people (Lane).

Commentary:

The exploiters of the labour of others are a class by themselves. They seek and scheme to debar the latter from the benefits of what they earn by the sweat of their brow. They revel in wealth, while the poor grovel in dirt and squalor before their very eyes.

4324. Commentary:

Sooner or later nemesis overtakes

these exploiters and their contrivances to deprive others of the fruit of their labour fail altogether in their purpose.

4325. Commentary:

The parable of the owners of the "garden" may apply also to the leaders of the Quraish who had made life very miserable for the poor Muslims. They were sternly warned that all their designs against Islam would come to nought and all their efforts would prove abortive and they would be deprived of all their gardens

34. Such is the punishment of this world. ^aAnd surely the punishment of the Hereafter is greater. Did they but know!⁴³²⁶

R. 2.

35. ^bFor the righteous, indeed, there are Gardens of Bliss with their Lord.⁴³²⁷

36. ^cShall We then treat those who submit to Us as We treat the guilty?

37. What is the matter with you? How judge ye!

38. Have you a Book wherein you read,

39. That you shall surely have in it whatever you choose?⁴³²⁸

40. Or have you any covenant binding on Us till the Day of Resurrection that you shall

كَذَلِكَ الْعَذَابُ ^طوَلْعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ
أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ^{٤٣٢٦}

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٍ
الَّتِي فِيهَا ^{٤٣٢٧}

أَفَجَعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ ^ط

مَا لَكُمْ ^{ظَفَّة}كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ ^{٣٧}

أَمْ لَكُمْ كِتَابٌ فِيهِ تَدْرُسُونَ ^{٣٨}

إِنَّ لَكُمْ فِيهِ لَمَا تَخَيَّرُونَ ^{٣٩}

أَمْ لَكُمْ أَيْمَانٌ عَلَيْنَا بِالْآخِرَةِ إِلَى
يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ لَكُمْ لَمَا تَحْكُمُونَ ^{٤٠}

^a13:35; 39:27. ^b13:30; 30:16; 68:35; 78:32-33. ^c32:19; 38:29; 45:22.

and "fruit." But those who turn to God with true repentance would be rewarded many times more than what they will lose.

4326. Commentary:

The verse speaks of two kinds of punishment. The punishment referred to in the preceding several verses in the words "such is the punishment" is the chastisement which overtook the opponents of Islam in this life. Those of them who repented were received in God's grace and were blessed with

worldly gifts many times more than what they had lost. But those who persisted in their opposition to Truth and died in disbelief, will have a great punishment in the Hereafter.

4327. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that while the rebellious owners of the "garden" (v. 18) will be deprived of it, the righteous believers will have "Gardens of Bliss" from their Lord.

4328. Commentary:

See next verse.

surely have whatever you judge?⁴³²⁹

41. Ask them which of them will vouch for that.

مما قلنا
عند الاستدلال

سَلِّمُوا إِلَيْهِمْ بِذَلِكَ زَعِيمٌ ۝٤١

42. Or have they any ‘partners’ of God? Let them, then, produce those ‘partners’ of theirs, if they speak the truth.

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ ۖ فَلْيَأْتُوا بِشُرَكَائِهِمْ
إِنْ كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ ۝٤٢

43. On the day when the truth shall be laid bare and they will be called upon to prostrate themselves, they will not be able to do so;⁴³³⁰

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَنْ سَاقٍ وَيُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى
السُّجُودِ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ۝٤٣

4329. Commentary:

In vv. 36-39 above, it was stated that a person who severs all connection with God and defies and contravenes His laws, can never be treated like one who makes those laws a rule of life. Both these classes of men choose different ways of life and inevitably come to different ends. This is God’s eternal and unchangeable laws which cannot be altered to suit anybody’s wishful thinking. Further, disbelievers were asked whether there was any authority in any revealed Scripture that they would be allowed to choose a way of life of their own liking and would escape the consequences of their evil deeds. In the present verse they are told that if they possess no Scriptural authority to support their foolish ideas, and if reason and logic too, do not support them, have they then taken a covenant from God

which will remain in force till the Day of Judgement that they will have whatever they like and do whatever they like and yet not suffer the consequences flowing from their actions? If they think so, the verse warns them, they are mistaken.

4330. Important Words:

يكشف عن ساقٍ (truth shall be laid bare). They say قامت القوم على ساقٍ i.e. the people were or became in a state of distress. The Arabic idiom كشفت الحرب عن ساقٍ means, the fight became vehement. ساقٍ meaning i.e. severity or hardness, the expression كشف الامر عن ساقٍ is explained as meaning, when the affair became distressful or when the truth of the matter was laid bare (Lane, Kashshāf and Baiḍāwī). See also 27:45.

Commentary:

The verse may refer to the hardness and severity of the Day of Resurrection or to the lifting of the

44. Their eyes will be cast down^a, and humiliation will cover them; and they were indeed called upon to prostrate themselves when they were safe and sound, *but they obeyed not.*

4331

45. ^bSo leave Me *alone* with those who reject this Word of Ours. ^cWe shall draw them *near to destruction* step by step from whence they know not. 4332

46. ^dAnd I give them respite; for My plan is strong. 4333

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهُقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ
وَقَدْ كَانُوا يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ
وَهُمْ سَالِمُونَ ۝

فَذَرْنِي وَمَنْ يُكَذِّبْ بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ
سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

وَأَمْلِي لَهُمْ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ ۝

^a75:25-26; 88:3-4. ^b73:12; 74:12. ^c7:183. ^d7:184.

veil from all mysteries and coming to light of all secrets on that Day.

The words, "They will not be able to do so," signify that the guilty will not be able to make amends for their sins of omission or commission, the time for repentance having passed long ago.

4331. Important Words:

ترهقهم (will cover them). رهقه means, it reached or overtook him or it; he followed him and was about to overtake him; it covered him or it. رهقت انما means, I committed a sin. رهقه الدين means, debt covered him. رهقه عسرا means, he constrained him to do a difficult thing (Lane and Aqrab).

Commentary:

When disbelievers were in full possession of all their faculties and were enjoying peace, prosperity and security, they defied and violated Divine laws, but when, on the

Judgement Day, punishment will stare them in the face, they will beg to be allowed to repent and make amends, but then it will be too late.

4332. Commentary:

The verse shows that Divine punishment will overtake disbelievers by degrees and in stages and thus they will have ample opportunities to repent and make amends by accepting the Message of the Quran. The punishment began with the Battle of Badr and reached its culmination in the Fall of Mecca, extending over a period of about eight years.

4333. Commentary:

God grants respite to sinful people in order that they might repent and give up their evil ways. He is not in a hurry to punish because they are within His control and in His grip and cannot evade or elude the mills of

47. ^a“Dost thou ask a reward of them that they are *as if* being weighed down by its burden?

4334

48. ^bHave They *the knowledge* of the unseen so that they write it down? 4335

49. So be thou steadfast in *carrying out* the command of thy Lord, and ^cbe not like the Man of the Fish when he called to his Lord and he was full of grief. 4336

50. ^dHad not a favour from his Lord reached him, he would have surely been cast upon a bare tract of land, while he would have been held to be blameworthy *by his people*. 4337

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُمْ مِنْ مَّغْرَمٍ
مُثْقَلُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُنْ كَصَاحِبِ
الْحُوتِ إِذْ نَادَىٰ وَهُوَ مَكْظُومٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

لَوْلَا أَنْ تَدْرَكَهُ نِعْمَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ لَنُبِذَ
بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُومٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

^a23:73; 52:41. ^b52:42. ^c21:88; 37:141. ^d21:89; 37:144-146.

God, which grind slowly but grind exceedingly small.

4334. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that God has granted respite to disbelievers that they may listen to and accept the Message of the Prophet who asks for no reward from them, but, on the contrary, actuated by sincere sympathy and solicitude for their spiritual well-being, preaches the Divine Word to them and suffers hardships for their sake.

4335. Commentary:

The disbelievers do not know what is in store for them—what is and what is not good for them. The

unseen has been revealed to the Prophet only. This is another reason why they should accept his Message.

4336. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is here comforted not to lose patience or give way to disappointment just because his people do not believe in him and oppose him. The time was fast approaching when they will listen, and give their allegiance, to him.

4337. Commentary:

The verse may also imply a subtle hint to the Holy Prophet's Hijrah (Migration) to Medina.

51. But his Lord chose him and made him *one* of the righteous.

فَاجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَجَعَلَهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

52. And those who disbelieve would fain have dislodged thee from thy God-given station with their *angry* looks when they heard the Reminder; and they say, 'He is certainly mad.'⁴³³⁸

وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٥٢﴾

53. Nay, it is naught but a *source of* honour for all the worlds.⁴³³⁹

وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

4338. Commentary:

The verse appears to say to the Holy Prophet that disbelievers cast severe looks at him that might frighten a person of a lesser calibre into giving up his mission, but he has a Divine Message to deliver to the world and so he can hardly be intimidated into yielding to such pressure tactics. They call him a madman. But far from this, his

teaching contains the quintessence of wisdom; through it not only his own people—the Arabs—would be lifted from the lowest depths of degradation to the highest summits of greatness and glory, but it would also cleanse other peoples, freeing them from moral blemishes and raising their spiritual stature (v. 52).

4339. Commentary:

See the preceding verse.

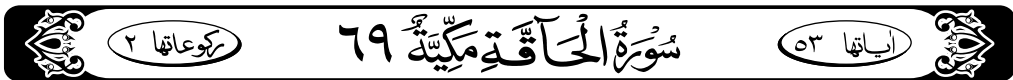
CHAPTER 69

AL-ḤĀQQAH

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

The *Sūrah*, like its predecessor, was, as its subject matter shows, among the earliest chapters revealed at Mecca. It is almost entirely devoted to the subject of the inevitability of the Resurrection; and adduces the sure and certain success of the Holy Prophet against heavy odds as an argument in support of that hypothesis. As the Holy Prophet's ultimate success, and the Resurrection were regarded by the disbelievers as impossible, the coming to pass of the one did indeed constitute an incontrovertible proof that the other would also happen. Thus the *Sūrah* opens with a firm and emphatic declaration that enemies of truth shall be routed, and disbelievers are warned that if they do not desist from their evil course, they will be punished like the people of Noah, the 'Ād and Thamūd tribes and the mighty hosts of Pharaoh. They "disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord, so He seized them—a severe seizing." The *Sūrah* draws a parallel between the destruction of the rejecters of Divine Message and the Resurrection, and proceeds to say that for disbelievers the "hour" of punishment will be most distressful and agonizing; for the believers it will be a time of perennial joy and happiness. The righteous servants of God "will have a delightful life in a lofty Garden," and the deniers of truth "will be seized, fettered and cast into Hell." The *Sūrah* closes with a firm and emphatic declaration that both these events—the Resurrection and the success of the Prophet's cause, will most surely come to pass, because what the Prophet says is God's own revealed Word and not the bragging of a poet or the idle conjecture of a soothsayer, for, if he had forged a lie against God, he would have met with sure and violent death, because a forger is never allowed to prosper.



(AL-HĀQQAH)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.⁴³⁴⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. The Inevitable! ⁴³⁴¹

الْحَاقَّةُ ①

3. What is the Inevitable?

مَا الْحَاقَّةُ ②

4. And what should make thee know what the Inevitable is?

وَمَا أَذْرِيكَ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ ③

5. *The tribe of Thamūd and the tribe of 'Ād treated as a lie the sudden calamity.*⁴³⁴²

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودٌ وَعَادٌ بِالْقَارِعَةِ ④

^aSee 1:1.

4340. Commentary:

See 1:1.

4341. Important Words:

الحاقة (the Inevitable) is derived from حق which means, it was or became suitable to the requirements of wisdom, justice or truth; it was or became established as a fact. حق الامر means, he established it as a fact. الحاقة being synonymous with حقيقة means, an inevitable event, reality or truth. See also 2:148, 181; 3:109; 23:63; 32:4. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The word الحاقة having the sense of an established or inevitable fact, or a catastrophe which is sure to happen, or according to some authorities, the final overthrow of disbelief, the verse may refer to the Day of Judgement or to a calamitous event that would befall disbelievers. The calamitous event may particularly refer to the Fall of Mecca when Islam became

firmly and finally established in Arabia and idol worship disappeared from the land for all time. The three brief opening verses of the *Sūrah* embodied a great prophecy that the overthrow of disbelievers was inevitable. The inevitability of their doom was declared at a time when Islam was yet in its infancy and was fighting for its very existence. The inevitable proved to be literally true, and thus set the seal on the inevitability of the Day of Judgement. See also 13:32.

4342. Important Words:

القارعة (the sudden calamity) is derived from قرع. They say قرع رأسه بالعصا i.e. he struck his head with a stick. قرع الباب means, he knocked at the door. القارعة means, a great calamity which strikes terror into the hearts of people (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Whereas, in the preceding three

6. ^aThen, as for Thamūd they were destroyed with a violent blast.⁴³⁴³

فَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَأُهْلِكُوا بِالطَّاغِيَةِ ①

7. ^bAnd as for ‘Ād, they were destroyed by a fierce roaring wind,

وَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَأُهْلِكُوا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصِرٍ
عَاتِيَةٍ ②

8. Which *God* caused to blow against them for seven nights and eight days continuously, so that thou mightest have seen the people therein lying prostrate^c, as though they were trunks of palm trees fallen down.⁴³⁴⁴

سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمَنِيَةً
أَيَّامٍ ③ حُسُومًا ④ فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا
صَرْعَى ⑤ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ خَاوِيَةٍ ⑥

9. Dost thou see any remnant of them?

فَهَلْ تَرَى لَهُم مِّنْ بَاقِيَةٍ ⑦

^a41:18; 54:32. ^b41:17; 54:20. ^c54:21.

verses, the inevitability of the doom in store for the opponents of the Holy Prophet was emphasized, in the verse under comment the case of the ‘Ād and the Thamūd tribes is cited to warn them that they should learn a lesson from the evil fate of these peoples, who in the remote past, flourished in their neighbourhood.

4343. Commentary:

طَغَى having been derived from طَغَى which means, he exceeded the limits, signifies an extremely severe punishment. For the nature of the calamity which befell the tribe of Thamūd see 7:79; 41:18 & 54:32. It has been variously described in the Quran as الصيحة (the violent cry): الرجفة (the earthquake): and الصاعقة (the thunderbolt). In fact it was a severe earthquake.

4344. Important Words:

حُسُومًا (continuously) is derived from حَسَمَ. They say حَسَمَهُ i.e. he cut it off entirely. حَسَمَهُمْ means, he caused them to perish completely. حَسَمَ فِي الْعَمَلِ means, he laboured hard and wearied himself with continuous work. حَسَمْتُ الدَابَّةَ means, I cauterized the beast by successive operations. أَيَّامُ الْحُسُومِ means, evil or unlucky days that are consecutive or permanent, or days preventing good or prosperity; disastrous days (Lane & Aqrab).

صَرْعَى (lying prostrate) is the plural of صَرَعَ which is derived from صَرَعَ. They say صَرَعَهُ he threw him down on the ground. صَرِيعٌ means, thrown down or prostrated in the ground; affected with epilepsy or madness; slain. One would say رَأَيْتُ شَجَرَهُمْ صَرْعَى i.e. I saw their trees cut down (Lane & Aqrab).

10. ^aAnd Pharaoh, and those who were before him, and the overthrown cities *persistently* committed sins.⁴³⁴⁵

وَجَاءَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَنْ قَبْلَهُ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكِ
بِالْخَاطِئَةِ ۝

11. And they disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord^b, therefore He seized them—a severe seizing.

فَعَصَوْا رَسُولَ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَهُمْ أَخْذَةً
رَّابِيَةً ۝

12. ^cVerily, when the waters rose high, We bore you in the boat,⁴³⁴⁶

إِنَّا لَمَّا طَغَا الْمَاءُ حَمَلْنَاكُمْ فِي
الْجَارِيَةِ ۝

13. That We might make it a reminder for you, ^dand that retaining ears might retain it.⁴³⁴⁷

لِنَجْعَلَهَا لَكُمْ تَذْكِرَةً وَتَعِيَهَا أُنْجًى
وَوَاعِيَةً ۝

14. ^eAnd when a single blast is sounded on the trumpet,⁴³⁴⁸

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ ۝

^a28:9, ^b73:17, ^c11:41; 54:14, ^d29:16; 54:16, ^e18:100; 23:102; 36:52; 39:69; 50:21.

4345. Commentary:

"The overthrown cities" were Sodom and Gomorrah. See also 11:83.

4346. Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to Noah's Flood.

4347. Important Words:

تعيها (might retain it) is derived from وعى. They say وعى الحديث i.e. he kept or retained the narrative in his mind or memory; he learned it by heart (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The various punishments which overtook disbelievers for their sins and opposition to Divine Prophets at different times have been mentioned as a standing and permanent reminder

to those who defy God's laws and His Message, implying that opponents of the Holy Prophet would meet with no better fate if they did not repent and give up their evil ways.

4348. Commentary:

From this verse begins a description of the punishment that overtook the opponents of the Holy Prophet, namely, the Fall of Mecca, their greatest stronghold and the centre of their power and glory. The Holy Prophet's march on Mecca was so swift and sudden that the Meccans were taken completely by surprise. It came, as it were, as a bolt from the blue.

The description may equally apply to the Day of Resurrection, when with the blowing of the trumpet both

15. And the earth and the mountains are heaved up and then are crushed in a single crash.⁴³⁴⁹

وَحُمِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا
دَكَّةً وَاحِدَةً^{١٥}

16. On that day will the *great* Event come to pass.⁴³⁵⁰

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ^{١٦}

17. And the heaven will cleave asunder,^a and it will be frail that day.⁴³⁵¹

وَأَشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَهِيَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاهِيَةٌ^{١٧}

18.^bAnd the angels will be *standing* on the sides thereof, and above them on that day eight *angels* will bear the throne of thy Lord.⁴³⁵²

وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ عَلَىٰ أَرْجَائِهَا يُحْمَلُونَ
عَرْشُ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَنِيَّةٌ^{١٨}

^a55:38; 84:2. ^b39:76; 40:8.

the righteous and the guilty will stand before God's Great Judgement Seat to render an account of their actions and deeds.

4349. Commentary:

The verse may also signify that the whole of Arabia will be shaken from one end to the other; leaders of Arab aristocracy and the common folk will feel the strong impact of the conquests of Islam and of the great and violent change it will bring about in their lives. الجبال may signify leaders of men and الارض common folk.

4350. Commentary:

On that day Mecca, the great centre of idol worship in Arabia will fall. The great event referred to here is also mentioned in 56:2, along with the results that followed from it.

4351. Important Words:

واهية (frail) is derived from واهى. They

say وهو الشيء i.e. the thing became worn out and weak. وهى الحائط means, the wall was about to fall. وهى الثوب means, the cloth was worn out. واهية means, weak, frail; broken or rent (Aqrah).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse may be to some natural phenomenon which took the form of Divine punishment. Or the word السماء meaning the covering overhead, the verse may signify that the covering over the heads of disbelievers would cleave asunder, i.e. with the Fall of Mecca their political power would vanish and no protection or asylum would remain for them except that they should join the fold of Islam.

4352. Important Words:

For عرش see 7:55, 10:4 and 20:6. The word represents God's transcendent attributes (صفات تنزيهية) which are His exclusive prerogative.

19. On that day you will be presented *before God*; and none of your secrets will remain hidden^a.⁴³⁵³

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَى مِنْكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ ۝١٩

20. ^bThen, as for him who is given his record in his right hand, he will say, 'Come, read my record.'⁴³⁵⁴

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَيَقُولُ هَؤُلَاءِ أَمْرًا قَرِئًا وَاتَّبِعْ

^a4:43; 41:21. ^b17:72; 45:30; 84:8-9.

These attributes are manifested through God's attributes of similitude (صفات تشبيهية) which have been described in the verse as the bearers of God's Throne.

Commentary:

God's attributes of similitude which have been described here as the bearers of the Divine Throne are رب العالمين i.e. the Creator and Sustainer of the world; الرحمن i.e. the Gracious, Who fulfils all the needs of man, even before he is born and without any effort on his part; الرحيم i.e. the Merciful. Who causes man's labours to produce the best possible results, and مالك يوم الدين i.e. Master of the Day of Judgement, to Whom all will have to render an account of their actions. These are the basic Divine attributes by which the world subsists and which mainly concern man's life and destiny. In view of their majesty, and greatness these four Divine attributes will have a double manifestation on the Day of Judgement. And as Divine attributes are manifested through angels, therefore, eight angels are mentioned to be the bearers of the Throne of God on that Great Day. Or the verse may signify that on the day of the Fall of Mecca the four basic

Divine attributes will have a double manifestation, as on that day the foundations of Islam, humanity's last and most perfect religious system, will be firmly laid and God's power and glory will be manifested through, and for the sake of, the Holy Prophet. The clause "the angels would be standing on the sides thereof" may also signify that when the heavens of Arabia would be cleft asunder, i.e. when old order will vanish, the angels of God will lay the foundation of a new and better one. Or the words may mean that when the heavens will be cleft asunder, i.e. when terrible punishment will overtake the Meccans, God's angels will take their stand on its sides in order to protect the Holy Prophet and the Muslims.

4353. Commentary:

Besides the meaning given in the text, the verse signifies that on the day of the Fall of Mecca falsity of the idolatrous beliefs and practices of the Meccans will stand completely exposed.

4354. Commentary:

Elsewhere in the Quran (56:28) the righteous are called "fellows or

21. 'Surely, I knew that I would meet my reckoning.'⁴³⁵⁵

إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلْقٍ حِسَابِيَّةٍ ﴿٢١﴾

22. ^aSo he will enjoy a delightful life,

فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. ^bIn a lofty Garden,⁴³⁵⁶

فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. ^cWhereof clusters of fruit will be within easy reach.⁴³⁵⁷

قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. ^dIt will be said to the righteous believers, 'Eat and drink joyfully because of the good deeds you did in days gone by.'

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. ^eBut as for him who is given his record in his left hand, he

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِشِمَالِهِ ﴿٢٦﴾

^a88:10; 101:8. ^b43:73; 88:11. ^c55:55; 76:15. ^d77:44. ^e56:42-43; 84:11-13.

companions of the right hand." To be given one's record in one's right hand is a Quranic metaphor for having passed the test successfully.

4355. Commentary:

The verse shows the firmness of the belief of the righteous believers in the Hereafter.

4356. Commentary:

This and the following several verses give a graphic description of the blissful life that the righteous would lead in Paradise. The blessings and gifts mentioned in these verses are physical representations in Paradise of actions and deeds the believers had done in the present life. Incidentally, the verses may apply to the life of comfort and the joy and peace the followers of the Holy

Prophet came to enjoy after they had conquered the vast fertile valleys of the Persian and Byzantine Empires. Those who used to live in miserable hovels and huts, became, in a few years, the dwellers of stately palaces.

4357. Important Words:

تطوف (clusters of fruit) is plural of تطف (qitfun) which is derived from تطف. They say تطف التمر i.e. he culled, plucked and gathered the fruit. تطف الشيء means, he took hastily the thing or snatched it. تطف means, a bunch of grapes; culled fruit (Aqrab).

Commentary:

Besides referring to the blessings and boons of Paradise, the verse may be taken also to refer to the worldly comforts that were at the disposal of the Holy Prophet's Companions.

will say, 'O! would that I had not been given my record!⁴³⁵⁸

فَيَقُولُ يَلَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُوتَ كِتَابِيَهٗ ۖ

27. Nor known what my reckoning was!

وَلَمْ أَدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيَهٗ ۖ

28. O! would that *death* had made an end of *me*!⁴³⁵⁹

يَلَيْتَهَا كَانَتِ الْقَاضِيَهٗ ۖ

29. My wealth has been of no avail to me.

مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّي مَالِيَهٗ ۖ

30. My power has gone from me.'

هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيَهٗ ۖ

31. *The angels will be commanded,* ^a"Seize him and fetter him,

خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ۖ

32. Then cast him into Hell.

ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ ۖ

33. Then put him into a chain the length of which is seventy cubits;⁴³⁶⁰

ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ۖ

^a76:5.

4358. Commentary:

To be given one's record in one's left hand, in Quranic terminology represents failure in a test. Elsewhere in the Quran (56:42) the guilty have been described as "fellows of the left hand."

4359. Commentary:

Disbelievers would wish death to be the end of all things so that there should be no other life and no rendering of account of their actions before God.

4360. Commentary:

It has repeatedly been explained in the Quran that life after death is not a

new life but only an image and manifestation of the present one. In these verses the spiritual torture of the present world has been represented as a physical punishment in the next world. The chain to be put round the neck, for instance, represents the desires of this world which keep a man's head bent upon the earth, and it is these desires that will assume the form of a chain in the life to come. Similarly, the entanglements of this world will be seen as chains on the feet. The heart-burning of this world will likewise appear as the flames of burning fire. The wicked man in fact has in this very world within himself a hell of

34. Verily, he did not believe in Allah, the Great,

إِنَّهٗ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝٤٤

35. ^aAnd he did not urge the feeding of the poor.⁴³⁶¹

وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ ۝٤٥

36. ^bNo friend, therefore has he here this day:

فَلَيْسَ لَهُ الْيَوْمَ هُنَا حَمِيمٌ ۝٤٦

37. Nor any food save the washing of wounds,^c

وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غَسِيلٍ ۝٤٧

38. Which none but the sinners eat.'

لَا يَأْكُلُهُ إِلَّا الْخَاطِئُونَ ۝٤٨

R. 2.

39. But nay, I swear by all that you see,⁴³⁶²

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِمَا تُبْصِرُونَ ۝٤٩

^a74:45; 89:19; 107:4. ^b43:68; 70:11; 80:38. ^c14:17; 78:25-26.

his passions and inextinguishable desires; he feels the burning of that hell in the failures he meets within this life. When, therefore, he will see a never-ending despair before him in the new world, his desires will assume the shape of burning fire.

The "securing" of the sinful with the chain of a length of seventy cubits reveals the same secret. The limit of man's age may generally be fixed at seventy, and a wicked person often lives up to that age in his wickedness. Sometimes, he even enjoys seventy years excluding the periods of childhood and decrepitude. These seventy years, during which he could work with honesty, wisdom and zeal he wastes away in the entanglements of the world and in satisfying his sensual passions. He does not try to free himself from the chain of desires, and, therefore, in the next world the chain of desires which he indulged in for seventy years shall be embodied

in a chain of a length of seventy cubits, every cubit representing a year, with which the wicked shall be fettered.

4361. Commentary:

The disbelievers did not befriend the poor and did not discharge their obligations to them. So they will have no friend at a time when they will stand in need of one on the Day of Reckoning, and will be given the washing of wounds to satisfy their hunger, because they did not feed the needy and the hungry in this life; their acts of omission in this life will take the form of the punishment described in these verses in the next life.

4362. Commentary:

The things which we see in the physical world, i.e. the visible facts of life, and the things which are hidden from our view, i.e. human reason and conscience, have been cited in the verses 39-40 as proofs to establish the

40. And by all that you see not,

وَمَا لَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41. That it is surely the word
brought by a noble Messenger;

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤١﴾

42. And it is not the word of a
poet;^a little is it that you
believe!

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ ۖ قَلِيلًا مَّا
تُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43. ^bNor is it the word of a
soothsayer; little is it that you
heed!

وَلَا بِقَوْلِ كَاهِنٍ ۖ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44. *It is* a revelation from the
Lord of the worlds.

تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45. ^cAnd if he had forged *and
attributed* any sayings to
Us, **4362A**

وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضُ الْأَقَاوِيلِ ﴿٤٥﴾

46. We would surely, have
seized him by the right
hand, **4362B**

لَا خِذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ ﴿٤٦﴾

47. And then surely, We would
have severed his life-artery,

ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ ۖ ﴿٤٧﴾

^a21:6; 26:225; 36:70; 52:31. ^b52:30. ^c40:29.

Divine origin of the Quran. Or the verses 39-40 may mean that the great signs which disbelievers in the Holy Prophet's time witnessed with their own eyes, and the prophecies about the bright future of Islam which yet await fulfilment constitute an irrefutable argument, that the Quran is God's own Word which He revealed to His noble Prophet Muḥammad. It deals with the hard facts of life and is not a poet's fond dream, nor the groping in the dark of a soothsayer. See also 26:225-227.

4362A. Important Words:

اقوال (sayings) is the plural of قول which is the plural of قال which means, he said. تقول عليه means, he forged a lie against him (Aqrab).

4362B. Important Words:

يمين (right hand) is derived from يمن. They say يمن الرجل i.e. he came from the side of the man. يمن الله فلاناً means, God made him blessed. يمن means, blessing, good luck; power, strength, right side (Aqrab).

48. And not one of you could have held *Our punishment* off from him.⁴³⁶³

فَمَا مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حَاجِزِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49. And verily, it is a reminder for the righteous.⁴³⁶⁴

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَذِكْرٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50. And surely, We know that there are some among you who reject *Our Signs*.

وَإِنَّا نَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مِنْكُمْ مُّكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51. And, verily, it will be a source of regret for the disbelievers.⁴³⁶⁵

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَسْرَةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

4363. Commentary:

In verses 39-40 above it was claimed that all visible and invisible things prove that the Holy Prophet is God's true Messenger and that the Quran is God's revealed Word and not the imaginary flight of a poet's mind or the wild conjectures of a diviner. In this and the preceding three verses another irrefutable argument is given to support his claim. The argument is to the effect that if the Holy Prophet had been a forger of lies against God, God's strong hand would have seized him by the throat and the Prophet would certainly have met with a violent death; his whole work and mission would have gone to pieces, because such is the fate of a false prophet. The claim and arguments contained in these verses seem to be an exact reproduction of the following Biblical statement: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren (i.e. the Ishmaelites) like unto thee and will put My word in his mouth;

and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. But the Prophet which shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak even that Prophet shall die" (Deut. 18:20).

4364. Commentary:

Only the righteous believers and those who have fear of God in their hearts will benefit from the arguments given in the above verse. Or the meaning is that the Quran would prove a potent means of raising those, who would believe in it, to great eminence—the root word ذكر from which تذكرة is derived meaning eminence.

4365. Commentary:

The verse means that disbelievers would some day regret the rejection of the Message of the Quran. Or it may mean that upon seeing the great boons and blessings bestowed upon Muslims as a result of following the teaching of the Quran, disbelievers would regret their rejection of it.

52. And surely, it is the true certainty.

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٥٢﴾

53. "So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great."⁴³⁶⁶

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٥٣﴾

^a56:75; 87:2.

4366. Commentary:

That the Quran is God's revealed Word is a certain truth which no honest man can deny. So, glory be to the Lord Who revealed it.

CHAPTER 70

AL-MA'ĀRIJ

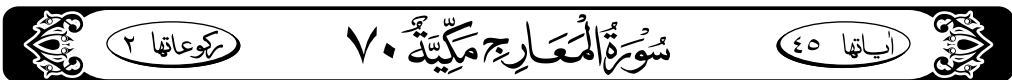
(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introductory Remarks

The *Sūrah* derives its title from the 4th verse. It was revealed at Mecca circa the 5th year of the Call, not later than the close of the early Meccan period. Nöldeke, Muir, and some other eminent authorities, assign this date to the revelation of the *Sūrah*.

In the preceding *Sūrah* the disbelievers were warned that the great Calamity (الفتنة) would soon overtake them if they did not repent of their sins and accept the Divine Message. The present *Sūrah* opens with a mention of the disbelievers' demand, viz. when will the threatened punishment be? They are told that it would soon be upon them, nay, it is at their door, and that when it comes, it would be so overwhelming and devastating that it would cause the mountains to fly like flakes of wool, and that the disbelievers would wish to part with their near and dear ones—their wives, children and brothers as a ransom for themselves. Then it would be too late to repent and they would burn in hellfire which would strip off their skins. But God's righteous servants will enjoy perfect happiness and security in "Gardens"—honoured and loved by their Lord.

Towards the close of the *Sūrah*, disbelievers are told again, that due to the Muslims now being few in number, and weak, the disbelievers consider prophecies about the glorious future of Islam as only the dream of a visionary, but the time was fast approaching when, with their eyes cast down, they would hasten to the Holy Prophet to accept Islam. Then they would realize, to their shame and sorrow, that what the Prophet had foretold about their eventual defeat was only too true.



(AL-MA'ĀRIJ)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. An inquirer inquires concerning the punishment about to befall^b 4367

سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ ②

3. The disbelievers, which none can repel.^c

لِلْكَافِرِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُ دَافِعٌ ③

4. *It is* from Allah, Lord of *great* ascents. 4368

مِّنَ اللَّهِ ذِي الْمَعَارِجِ ④

5. The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him in a day, the measure of which is fifty thousand years. 4369

تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ
كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ⑤

^aSee 1:1. ^b52:8; 56:2. ^c52:9; 56:3.

4367. Commentary:

"The inquirer" in the verse is taken by some commentators to refer to Naḍr bin Al-Ḥārith, or Abū Jahl. But it need not refer to any particular person. The disbelievers had repeatedly challenged the Holy Prophet to bring down upon them the threatened punishment (10:49; 21:39; 27:72; 32:29; 34:30; 36:49; 67:26). The demand was made in doubt and mockery. They had gone so far as to challenge the Prophet with the words, "O Allah, if this be indeed the truth from Thee, then rain down upon us stones from heaven or bring down upon us a grievous punishment" (8:33). The word "inquirer" may refer to all such questioners.

4368. Commentary:

The verse may mean that instead of demanding punishment the

disbelievers should have accepted the Message of Islam and thus should have won the pleasure of God. Or it may mean that while the punishment that will overtake disbelievers will be highly destructive, the ascent of the believers to heights of spiritual perfection will also be without end. Or the verse may signify that as the attributes of God are manifested in stages, the punishment of disbelievers will also come in stages. The verse may also signify that the day when disbelievers will receive the most humiliating punishment in the form of the Fall of Mecca will be the most auspicious day in the Holy Prophet's life—the day of his معراج (Ascension), when he will be at the height of his power.

4369. Important Words:

الروح (Spirit) means, the human soul;

6. ^aSo be patient with admirable patience.⁴³⁷⁰

فَاصْبِرْ صَبْرًا جَمِيلًا ①

7. They see it to be far off,

إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيدًا ⑦

8. ^bBut We see it to be nigh.

وَنَرَاهُ قَرِيبًا ⑧

9. The day when the heaven will become like molten copper,

يَوْمَ تَكُونُ السَّمَاءُ كَالْمُهْلِ ⑨

10. ^cAnd the mountains will become like flakes of wool,⁴³⁷¹

وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ ⑩

11. ^dAnd a friend will not inquire after a friend.

وَلَا يَسْأَلُ حَمِيمٌ حَمِيمًا ⑪

12. Though they will be placed in sight of one another, ^eand the guilty one would fain ransom himself from the punishment of

يُبْصِرُونَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِ لَوْ يُفْتَدَى

مِنْ عَذَابٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَيْنِيهِ ⑫

^a15:86. ^b17:52; 78:41. ^c20:106; 70:10; 101:6. ^d44:42; 69:36; 37:35. ^e5:37; 13:19; 39:48.

spirit; the vital principle; inspiration; revelation; Word of God; the Quran; angel Gabriel; joy; happiness; mercy of God, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

الروح meaning human soul, the word may signify that development and progress of the human soul will know no end. Or the verse may mean that Divine plans and programmes take thousands of years to mature. Or, the words "fifty thousand years" may have reference to the age of the world as estimated by some geologists from a study of the layers of earth. Or the reference may be to a specific cycle of fifty thousand years in which a great change was decreed to take place, because Divine prophecies have their fixed periods, epochs and

cycles in which they are fulfilled.

4370. Commentary:

Divine prophecies sometimes take thousands of years for their fulfilment. The Holy Prophet^{sa} is enjoined to bear with patience the mockery and jibes of disbelievers because the hour of their punishment is delayed in order that they may have time to take heed, repent or make amends.

4371. Commentary:

In this age of atom and hydrogen bombs, the flying of mountains like flakes of wool, is not an impossible occurrence.

These verses may also have metaphorical reference to the Fall of Mecca.

that day by offering his children,⁴³⁷²

13. ^aAnd his wife and his brother,

14. And his kinsfolk who sheltered him,

15. And by offering all those who are on the earth, if only thus he might save himself.

16. But no! surely it is a flame of Fire,

17. ^bStripping off the skin even to the extremities of the body.⁴³⁷³

18. It will call him who turned his back and retreated.

19. ^cAnd hoarded wealth, and held it.⁴³⁷⁴

20. Verily, man is born impatient and miserly.⁴³⁷⁵

وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَأَخِيهِ ۝١٣

وَفَصِيلَتِهِ الَّتِي تُتَوِيهِ ۝١٤

وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا لَّئِمَّا يُنَجِّيهِ ۝١٥

كَلَّا إِنَّهَا نَظْيٌ ۝١٦

نَزَّاعَةً لِّلشَّوْيِ ۝١٧

تَدْعُوا مَنْ أَدْبَرَ وَتَوَلَّى ۝١٨

وَجَمَعَ فَأَوْغَى ۝١٩

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ۝٢٠

^a31:34; 80:37. ^b74:30. ^c9:34; 53:35; 104:3.

4372. Commentary:

What an awe-inspiring picture of the Day of Judgement is given in these verses! Face to face with a calamity man is prepared to part with everything, even to sacrifice his dearest and nearest ones if only by doing so he can save his own skin.

4373. Important Words:

الشوى (extremities) is derived from شوى (shawa). They say شوى اللحم i.e. he roasted meat. شوى means, the arms or hands and the legs or feet, or the fore and hind legs and the extremities

collectively; (2) the head of a human being or the bone above the brain. It is also the plural of شاة, which means, the skin of the head in which grow the hair (Lane & Aqrab).

4374. Commentary:

The hoarding of wealth, and not spending it in the service or promotion of good causes is very strongly condemned in these verses.

4375. Important Words:

هلوعًا (impatient & miserly) is derived from هلع which means, he was or became agitated, restless, seized

21. ^aWhen evil touches him, he is full of lamentations,

إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ۝

22. But when good falls to his lot, he is niggardly.

وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا ۝

23. Save those who pray.

إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ ۝

24. ^bThose who are constant in their Prayer, ⁴³⁷⁶

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ ۝

25. ^cAnd those in whose wealth there is a recognized right ^{4376A}

وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ ۝

26. For one who asks *for help* and *for one* who does not. ⁴³⁷⁷

لِلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ۝

27. ^dAnd those who believe in the Day of Judgement to be a reality, ⁴³⁷⁸

وَالَّذِينَ يُصَدِّقُونَ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝

^a33:20. ^b6:93; 23:10. ^c51:20. ^d37:53-54.

with abject discouragement; he became hungry. هُلُوْع means, one who becomes restless and easily agitated and discouraged when in difficulty; one who is greedy about wealth and miserly in spending it; one who is much grieved and loses patience when in trouble (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The words, "man is born impatient and miserly," mean that man by nature is impatient and miserly. For this meaning of خلق see 21:38 & 30:55.

4376. Commentary:

Prayer is the best form of worship; it is an obligation which man owes to God, as the "giving of wealth to the poor" is his obligation to his fellow man. These two together constitute the quintessence of all religious teaching.

4376A. Commentary:

This verse shows that all things in the universe being the common property of all mankind, there can be no absolute ownership of anything vesting in any individual, with the poor having a rightful share in the wealth of the rich.

4377. Important Words:

المحروم may signify those persons who from a sense of dignity or from some infirmity would not ask for alms. The word includes animals also in its signification.

4378. Commentary:

There can be no real sense of responsibility without a true and living belief in the Hereafter when man shall have to render account of his actions to his Lord and Creator.

28. And those who are fearful of the punishment of their Lord—

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّهِمْ
مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

29. Verily the punishment of their Lord is not *a thing* to feel secure from—

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمْ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ ﴿٧٩﴾

30. ^aAnd those who guard their private parts—

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

31. ^bExcept from their wives and *from* those whom their right hands possess; such indeed are not to blame;⁴³⁷⁹

إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

32. ^cBut those who seek to go beyond that, it is these who are transgressors—

فَمَنِ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

33. ^dAnd those who are watchful of their trusts, and their covenants.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ
رِعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

34. And those who are upright in their testimonies,

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِشَهَادَتِهِمْ قَائِمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

35. And those who are strict in the observance of their Prayer.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ
يَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

36. ^eThese will be in the Gardens, duly honoured.⁴³⁸⁰

أُولَٰئِكَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

^a23:6. ^b23:7. ^c23:8. ^d23:9. ^e18:108; 23:12.

Belief in the Hereafter is the second cardinal belief of Islam, next to belief in the existence of God.

4379. Commentary:

For a detailed explanation of this verse see 23:7 and 24:34.

4380. Commentary:

These verses (vv. 24-33) mention those seven special marks of a true believer the possession of which leaves nothing to be desired and renders him fully deserving of the highest reward—the love and

R. 2.

37. But what is the matter with those who disbelieve, that they come hastening towards thee,^a

38. From the right hand and from the left, in different parties?⁴³⁸¹

39. Does every man among them hope to enter the Garden of Bliss?

40. Never! We have created them of that which they know.⁴³⁸²

41. But nay! I swear by the Lord of the Easts and of the Wests, that We have the power^{4382A}

فَمَا لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قِبَلَكَ مُهْطِعِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ عِزِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

أَيُظْمَعُ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُدْخَلَ جَنَّةَ نَعِيمٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

كَلَّا ۖ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِمَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِرَبِّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ
إِنَّا لَقَدِرُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

^a14:43-44.

pleasure of God—which in the Quran is termed as الفردوس (23:12) or الجنة (the Garden). See also 23:12.

4381. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse give a prophetic description of the coming triumph of Islam when the pagan tribes of Arabia, from every part of the country, hastened to wait in deputations upon the Holy Prophet, begging to be taken into the fold of Islam. Or the verses may refer to the highly alluring offers made by the leaders of the Quraish to the Holy Prophet, if only he should give up preaching against their idols. By some authorities, however, the verses have been taken to refer to the dangerous attacks that were made on

the Holy Prophet in different forms by his opponents.

4382. Commentary:

Taken along with its predecessor, the verse would mean that a man cannot hope to be received into God's favour by mere expression of a pious wish. He has first to discharge his obligations to God, and his fellow-beings, and by making full use of God-given powers and faculties he has to traverse all the different stages of spiritual progress before he can hope to enter "the Garden of Bliss." The word ما signifies natural powers and faculties with which God has endowed him.

4382A. Commentary:

See 37:6.

42. To bring in their place others better than they, and We cannot be frustrated *in Our plans*.^{4382B}

عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُبَدِّلَ خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ^{٤٣٨٢} وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ^{٤٣٨٢}

43. "So leave them alone to indulge in idle talk and play until they meet that day of theirs which they are promised,"⁴³⁸³

فَذَرْهُمْ يَخُوضُوا وَيَلْعَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي يُوْعَدُونَ^{٤٣٨٣}

44. ^bThe day when they will come forth from their graves hastening, as though they were racing to a target,⁴³⁸⁴

يَوْمَ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعًا كَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ نُصَبٍ يُوْفِّضُونَ^{٤٣٨٤}

45. Their eyes cast down, humiliation covering them^c. Such is the day which they are promised.⁴³⁸⁵

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهُقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ^{٤٣٨٥} ذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ^{٤٣٨٥}

^a23:55; 43:84; 52:46. ^b36:52; 50:45; 54:8. ^c10:28; 54:8.

4382B. Commentary:

The opponents of the Holy Prophet are told here that it is an unalterable Divine decree that Islam shall succeed and prevail in Arabia and that if they rejected it, other people would enter its fold and inherit God's blessings. The old order would change and from its ruins would emerge a new and better order.

4383. Commentary:

The expression, "that day of theirs which they are promised," means the day of the final triumph of Islam in Arabia and the complete defeat and discomfiture of disbelief—the day of the Fall of Mecca.

4384. Important Words:

اجداث (graves) being the plural of

جداث which means, a grave; a sepulchre (Lane), it stands here for the houses of the disbelievers who were spiritually no better than dead.

نصب means, a thing set up; a milestone; a goal or target (Aqrab).

Commentary:

See next verse.

4385. Commentary:

What a true and graphic picture of the leaders of the Quraish, after the Fall of Mecca, when they came to the Holy Prophet, completely dejected, dispirited and dismayed, their eyes cast down, and disappointment, and a sense of guilt and regret, writ large on their faces? They deserved a very severe punishment, but the Holy Prophet forgave them out of such

magnanimity of heart, as is unparalleled in history, not uttering even a word of reproach or taunt.	That was their promised day—the day of their utter disgrace and humiliation.
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CHAPTER 71

NŪḤ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Title, Context, and Date of Revelation

As the *Sūrah* records the spiritual experiences of the Prophet Noah, it has been named after him. Wherry gives the date of its revelation as the 7th year of the Call, while Nöldeke places it in the 5th year but according to other authorities it was revealed in the first Meccan period, about the time when some of the immediately preceding *Sūrahs* were revealed.

Towards the end of the preceding *Sūrah* it was stated that wicked people invariably reject the Divine Message; they oppose and persecute God's Messengers till the hour of their punishment arrives, and they meet their deserved end. The present *Sūrah* gives a brief account of the missionary activities of one of the great Prophets of antiquity—Noah—who was so bitterly and stubbornly opposed that he prayed to God: "Let not a single disbeliever remain alive in the land". A very destructive flood engulfed the whole country, bringing in its wake utter ruin and devastation.

Summary of Subject Matter

Noah's account appears at several places in the Quran—with some detail in *Sūrah* Hūd (vv. 26-50). In the present *Sūrah*, however, he pours out the agony of his heart before his Lord and Creator, in words full of extreme pathos. He preached to his people day and night, he says, and spoke to them in public and in private. He reminded them of the great favours and gifts that God had bestowed upon them. He warned them of the evil consequences of rejection of the Divine Message. But all his preaching and warning, his sympathy with and solicitude for, their well-being was only met with ridicule, opposition and abuse; and instead of following one whose heart was full of love for them, they chose to follow those leaders who led them to destruction. When Noah's exhortations and preachings of a whole lifetime proved a voice in the wilderness, he prayed to God to ruin and destroy the enemies of truth. The *Sūrah* closes with this prayer of Noah.



(NŪH)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bWe sent Noah to his people, saying, 'Warn thy people before there comes upon them a grievous punishment.' ⁴³⁸⁶

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ

الْيَمِّ ②

3. ^cHe said, 'O my people! surely I am a plain Warner unto you,

قَالَ يَقَوْمِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ③

4. ^dThat you serve Allah and fear Him and obey me. ⁴³⁸⁷

إِنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُوا ④

5. He will forgive you your sins and grant you respite till an appointed time. ^eVerily, the time appointed by Allah cannot be put back when it comes, if only you knew!' ⁴³⁸⁸

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرْكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَيَّ ٥
إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ ٦ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ⑤

6. He said, 'My Lord, I have called my people night and day,

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا ⑥

^aSee 1:1. ^b11:26; 23:24. ^c7:60; 11:26. ^d7:60; 11:27; 23:24. ^e63:12.

4386. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet represented in himself all the Divine Messengers that had gone before him. The account given in this *Sūrah* of the Prophet Noah applies with equal effect to the conditions and circumstances through which the Holy Prophet had to pass. It is in this light that the meaning of the *Sūrah* should

be read and appreciated.

4387. Commentary:

Observance of Divine laws, discharge of obligations due to God, and obedience to the commands and behests of His Prophets constitute the sum and substance of all religious teaching.

4388. Commentary:

When a Divine decree of

7. But my calling *them*, has only made them flee *from me* all the more.

فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَايَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ٧

8. And every time I called them that Thou mightest forgive them, they put their fingers into their ears, and ^acovered *themselves with* their garments, and persisted in *their iniquity*, and were disdainfully proud.⁴³⁸⁹

وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَاسْتَغْشَوْا ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصْرُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا ٨

9. Then, I called them to *righteousness* openly.

ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ جِهَارًا ٩

10. Then I preached to them in public, and admonished them in private.⁴³⁹⁰

ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرَارًا ١٠

11. ^bAnd I said, “Seek forgiveness of your Lord; for He is the Great Forgiver.

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ١١

12. He will send down rain for you in abundance,

يُرْسِلُ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا ١٢

13. And He will grant you increase of wealth and children, and He will cause gardens *to grow* for you and will cause rivers *to flow* for you.

وَيُمِدُّكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا ١٣

^a11:6. ^b11:4, 53.

punishment is in active operation, repentance is of no use.

avenues of their hearts against it.

4389. Important Words:

For a detailed discussion of ثياب, see 74:5, and for استغشوا 11:6. The phrase استغشوا ثيابهم metaphorically means, they refused to listen to the Divine Message. They closed up all the

4390. Commentary:

These verses signify that the Prophet Noah employed all means to make his people listen to the Divine Message. But they were equally determined not to listen to it.

14. What is the matter with you that you expect not wisdom and staidness from Allah?⁴³⁹¹

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا^{١٤}

15. ^aAnd He has created you in *different* forms and *different* conditions.⁴³⁹²

وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا^{١٥}

16. ^bHave you not seen how Allah has created seven heavens in *perfect* harmony,

أَلَمْ تَرَوْا كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ
طِبَاقًا^{١٦}

17. ^cAnd has placed the moon therein as a light, and made the sun as a lamp?

وَجَعَلَ الْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ
الشَّمْسَ سِرَاجًا^{١٧}

18. ^d“And Allah has caused you to grow as a *good* growth from the earth,⁴³⁹³

وَاللَّهُ أَنْبَتَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا^{١٨}

^a23:13-15; 40:68. ^b65:13; 67:4. ^c10:6; 25:62. ^d7:26; 20:56.

4391. Important Words:

وقاراً (wisdom and staidness) is derived from وقر. They say وقر الرجل i.e. the man was or became grave, steady, wise, dignified, patient. وقار means, wisdom, staidness, dignity, gravity; greatness (Aqrab).

Commentary:

God (said Noah to his people) had conferred innumerable blessings upon them, the greatest being that He raised among them a Prophet by following whose teaching they could achieve greatness, a place of dignity and respect among the nations of the world.

4392. Important Words:

اطوار (forms and conditions) is the plural of طور which, among other things, means, one time; quantity; measure; limit; state and condition; quality; capability; mode or manner.

They say الناس اطوار i.e. people are of diverse sorts, of different conditions and forms; of various dispositions; capabilities; in different stages (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse may refer to the different stages and conditions of development through which the foetus passes—from the stage of a drop of sperm to that of a fully developed human being. This development of the foetus is fully described in 23:14-15.

The verse may also signify that God has endowed different persons with different natural capacities and capabilities and that the existence, growth and development of human society depends on this disparity of attitudes and physical conditions.

4393. Commentary:

The verse refers to the process of

19. ^a“Then will He cause you to return thereto, and He will bring you forth a new bringing forth.” **4394**

ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ
إِخْرَاجًا ①٩

20. ^b“And Allah has made the earth for you a wide expanse

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا ②٠

21. ^c“That you may traverse the open ways thereof.”

لِتَسْلُكُوا مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا ②١

R. 2.

22. Noah said, ‘My Lord, they have disobeyed^d and followed one whose wealth and children have only added to his ruin.

قَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَاتَّبَعُوا
مَنْ لَمْ يَزِدْهُ مَالُهُ وَوَلَدُهُ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ②٢

23. And they have planned a mighty plan.

وَمَكْرُوا مَكْرًا كُبَرًا ②٣

24. And they say to one another, “Forsake not your gods.^e And forsake neither Wadd nor Suwa’, nor Yaghūth and Ya’ūq and Nasr.” **4395**

وَقَالُوا لَا تَذَرُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ
وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ
وَنَسْرًا ②٤

^a7:26; 20:56. ^b20:54; 67:16; 78:7. ^c21:32. ^d26:118; 54:10. ^e38:7.

man’s creation from the earliest stage when he lies dormant in the form of dust. The inorganic constituents of the earth, through a subtle process of change, become converted into the life-germ through the agency of food which man eats.

4394. Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to the Resurrection. Man will get a new life in the Hereafter in which his works and actions done in this life will assume the form of rewards and punishments of Heaven and Hell.

4395. Important Words:

ود (Wadd) is derived from ود (Wadda). They say دده i.e. he loved him or it. ود (Wadd) was an idol worshipped by the tribe of Banū Kalb in Daumatul-Jandal. It was in a man’s figure, representing manly power.

سواع (Suwā’) is derived from ساع. They say ساع الشيء i.e. the thing was wasted (Lane). سواع was an idol which the Banū Hudhail worshipped. It was in a woman’s shape, representing female beauty.

يغوث (Yaghūth) is derived from غاث. They say غاثه i.e. he aided or helped

25. And they have led many astray;^a so increase Thou not the wrongdoers but in error.'

وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَالًا ۝٢٥

26. ^bBecause of their sins they were drowned and made to enter Fire. And they found no helpers for themselves against Allah.

مِمَّا خَطِيئَتُهُمْ أُغْرِقُوا فَأُدْخِلُوا نَارًا ۝
فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْصَارًا ۝٢٦

27. And Noah said, 'My Lord, leave not on the land a single dweller of the disbelievers;'⁴³⁹⁶

وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ دَيَّارًا ۝٢٧

^a14:37. ^b21:78; 26:121; 37:83; 54:12-13.

him. يغوث was an idol belonging to the tribe of Murād. Its votaries believed that it helped them when they called for help.

عاق (Ya'ūq) is derived from عاق. They say عاقه عن كذا i.e. he hindered or prevented or withheld him from such a thing (Lane). يعوق was an idol belonging to the tribe of Hamdān. It was in the shape of a horse, representing swiftness. Its votaries believed that it prevented the enemy from doing harm to its worshippers, and warded off calamities from them.

نسر (Nasr) is derived from نسر. They say نسر الطير i.e. the bird tore it with its beak. نسر means, eagle or vulture (Aqrab). It was an idol of the Dhul-Kilā' tribe. It was in the shape of an eagle or vulture, representing long life or insight.

Commentary:

From time immemorial, man, in his ignorance, has worshipped forces of nature, idols made of wood or stone, and human beings. Noah's people

were steeped in idol worship. They had many idols, the five mentioned in the verse under comment being the most popular. The Arabs, several centuries afterwards, are supposed to have brought them from Iraq; Hubal, their most famous idol, was brought from Syria by 'Āmir bin Loḥay; their own principal idols being Lāt, Manāt and 'Uzzā. Or the Arabs might have named their own idols after the idols of the tribe of Noah as the two peoples were not very distant from each other and there was general intercourse between them. There is nothing impossible or improbable in the two neighbouring idolatrous peoples having identical names for their idols.

4396. Important Words:

دَيَّار is derived from دأى and means, one who lives in a house. They say مافى الدار دَيَّار i.e. there is no one in the house (Lane).

Commentary:

God's Prophets are full of the milk

28. For, if Thou dost leave them, they will *only* lead astray Thy servants and will not beget but sinners *and* disbelievers. ⁴³⁹⁷

إِنَّكَ إِنْ تَذَرَهُمْ يُضِلُّوا عِبَادَكَ
وَلَا يَلِدُوا إِلَّا فَاَجِرًا كَفَّارًا ﴿٢٨﴾

29. "My Lord! forgive me and my parents, and him who enters my house as a believer, and the believing men and the believing women; and increase Thou not the wrongdoers but in perdition.'

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِمَنْ دَخَلَ
بَيْتِي مُؤْمِنًا وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا ﴿٢٩﴾

^a14:42.

of human kindness. Noah's prayer shows that opposition to him must have been long, persistent and unremitting, and that all his efforts to bring his people to the right path must have been abortive, and that there had remained no possibility for any further addition to his small following, and also that his opponents must have exceeded all legitimate bounds in opposing and persecuting him and his followers, and in indulging in evil pursuits. Matters must have come to such a pass that a man of a compassionate disposition like Noah was constrained to pray against his people. In an identical situation the Holy Prophet's attitude to his opponents presents a vivid contrast. In the Battle of Uhud, the Holy Prophet had two of his teeth broken. He was badly wounded and bled profusely, and yet the only words that escaped his lips on that

occasion, were, "How will a people get salvation who have wounded their Prophet and have smeared his face with blood, for no fault but that he calls them to God. My Lord! forgive my people, they know not what they do" (Zurqānī & Hishām).

الارض (the land) in the verse signifies Noah's own land—Iraq—and not the whole earth. This word has been used at several places in the Quran in the sense of a particular land or country (5:27 & 28:82).

4397. Commentary:

Noah's prayer, embodied in this and the preceding verse may be read as not against but rather for his people. Besides the meaning given in the text the prayer may signify that not a single disbeliever should remain in the land, i.e. all should become believers.

CHAPTER 72

AL-JINN

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

This *Sūrah* is generally considered to have been revealed on the Holy Prophet's return from Ṭā'if, where, after he was despaired of the Meccans from whom he received nothing but ridicule, opposition and persecution, he had gone to preach his Message. The visit to Ṭā'if took place two years before Hijrah when the opposition to the new Faith had taken an ugly turn and the condition of the Prophet and his followers had become desperate in the extreme. If, as some authorities are of the view, the *Sūrah* relates to an incident other than the one mentioned in *Sūrah Aḥqāf* (46:30-33), then it might have been revealed much earlier. The context and contents of the *Sūrah* seem to lend some weight to the latter view.

Subject Matter

In the preceding *Sūrah* it was stated that the lifelong preaching of Prophet Noah had been met with only jibes and jeers, and that only a few persons other than his near relatives had given him their allegiance—his son and wife taking an active part in opposition to his mission. In order to show that there existed a similarity between the circumstances which Noah had to meet with and the circumstances which the Holy Prophet had to face, it is stated that a party of the jinn,—a people not known to the Prophet before—visited him, listened to the Quran and at once believed in him. The *Sūrah* gives a fairly long account of the beliefs and doctrines of these people, their conduct and outlook on life. They denounce the doctrine that God can ever take unto Himself a son or a wife as an extravagant lie, and the *Sūrah* gives strong arguments in refutation of this doctrine.

Next, the *Sūrah* emphatically affirms that it is impossible for anyone to distort or tamper with the revealed Word of God because, like a precious treasure, it is strongly guarded by divine sentinels. Towards the close of the *Sūrah*, it is stated that whenever a Divine teacher calls men to God, the forces of evil try to stifle his voice, but the Teacher carries on his mission, undeterred by the machinations of evilly disposed people. The *Sūrah* closes with an infallible criterion to test the Divine Source of the Message of a Prophet viz. that it contains prophecies about great world events which human knowledge cannot foresee or foretell, and that the Prophet succeeds in delivering his Message because God "causes an escort of guarding angels to go before him and after him".



(AL-JINN)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Say, 'It has been revealed to me that a company of the jinn listened, and they said: "Truly, we have heard a Quran that is wonderful"^b. 4398

قُلْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا ①

3. ^cIt guides to the right way; so we have believed in it, and we will not associate anyone with our Lord. 4399

يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ ① وَلَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا أَحَدًا ②

4. *The truth is* that the majesty of our Lord is exalted. ^dHe has taken neither wife nor son unto Himself.

وَأَنَّهُ تَعَالَى جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b46:30. ^c46:31-32. ^d17:112; 18:5; 25:3.

4398. Important Words:

جن (jinn) is derived from جن (Janna) which means, it veiled, concealed, covered or protected him or it. جن (jinn) means, such beings as remain aloof from the people concealing themselves; strangers; the main or chief part or body of mankind, etc. (Lane & Aqrab). See also 6:101,129 and 27:18.

Commentary:

The reference in the words "a company of the jinn" may be to a party of Jews of Naṣībīn. They were non-Arabs and being strangers they have been called جن (jinn) which word among other things means, a stranger. The incident mentioned in

the verse seems to be different from the one referred to in vv. 46:30-33, though the verse is taken by some authorities to refer to those verses; the words put in the mouth of "a company of the jinn" mentioned in the present verse having a seeming resemblance with the words spoken by "a party of the jinn" referred to in vv. 46:30-33.

The word جن also meaning a large body of mankind, the verse may be taken as embodying a prophecy that at sometime in future large numbers of men from among the powerful nations of the world will accept Islam.

4399. Commentary:

This verse shows that "a company

5. And that the foolish amongst us used to utter extravagant lies concerning Allah.⁴⁴⁰⁰

وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ سَفِيهُنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ شَطَطًا ۝

6. And we had thought that men and jinn would never speak a lie concerning Allah.

وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نَقُولَ الْإِنسَ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ۝

7. ^a“Indeed some men from among the common folk used to seek the protection of some men from among the jinn, and they *thus* increased the *latter* in arrogance;⁴⁴⁰¹

وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ الْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا ۝

8. And indeed they thought, even as you think, that Allah

وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن لَّنْ يَبْعَثَ

^a6:129.

of the jinn" were either Unitarian Christians or such Jews, as were closely associated with Christians, or being under their influence, were conversant with Christian beliefs.

4400. Important Words:

شَطَطًا (extravagant lies) is derived from شَط (shatṭa) which means, he transgressed or acted wrongfully or unjustly; he exceeded the legitimate bounds; he became removed far away from the right path. أَمْرٌ ذُو شَطَطٍ means, an affair that is extravagant or exorbitant, or which exceeds legitimate bounds. شَطَطٌ means, enormity; enormous or extravagant lie (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

It appears from the relevant verses that "a company of the jinn" were believers in Divine Unity.

4401. Important Words:

رَهَقًا (arrogance) is derived from رَهَقَ (rahiqa) which means, he was or became stupid and frivolous; he did wrong, abominable things; he told a lie. رَهَقٌ (rahqun) means, wrongdoing, injustice, tyrannical conduct; sin; levity; compelling or urging a person to do a thing which he is not able to do; folly; arrogance or pride (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

As the word رِجَالٌ is used only with regard to human beings, the verse shows that "a company of the jinn," mentioned in this and in *Sūrah Aḥqāf* were human beings and not any other species of creation. Moreover, هُنَا here may signify big or influential men and هُنَا here lowly and humble ones who by following the former and seeking

would never raise any
Messenger.^{4401A}

9. And we sought to reach
heaven, but we found it filled
with strong guards and shooting
stars^a.⁴⁴⁰²

10. And we used to sit in some
of its seats to listen. But whoso
listens now, finds a shooting
star in ambush for him.⁴⁴⁰³

اللَّهُ أَحَدًا ۝

وَإِنَّا لَمُسْنَا السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مُلِئَتْ

حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهَبًا ۝

وَإِنَّا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَاعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ ۖ

فَمَنْ يَسْمِعِ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَصَدًا ۝

^a15:17-19; 37:7-9.

their protection increase their conceit
and arrogance.

4401A. Commentary:

The Jews had ceased to believe as
early as in the time of the Prophet
Joseph that no Divine Messenger
would ever appear after him (40:35).

4402. Important Words:

حرس (guards) is derived from حرس
which means, he guarded, took care;
he stole or stole by night. حرس
(*ḥarasun*) is the plural of حراس which
means, a guard or guardian; a thief,
used ironically because guardians are
sometimes found to be thieves (Lane
& Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse shows that when a
Divine Reformer is about to make his
appearance in the world, an unusual
shooting of stars takes place. It is to
this exceptional natural phenomenon
that reference is made in this verse.
"Seeking to reach heaven," means,
trying to steal the secrets of the
unknown. See next verse.

4403. Important Words:

رصدا (in ambush) is noun-infinitive
from رصد (*raṣada*). They say أرصده i.e.
he watched or waited for him; lay in
ambush for him. مرصدا and رصد and
مرصد all mean, a hiding place; an
ambush كان له بالمرصد or قد له بالمرصد
means, he lay in ambush for him. An Arab
poet says: إن النايا للرجال بمرصد i.e. verily
deaths are lying in ambush for men
(Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Before the appearance of a Divine
Reformer, soothsayers and diviners
dabble in occult sciences, and
with the help of their questionable
practices seek to hoodwink simple
people by posing to be able to have
access to the secrets of the unknown,
and as they are generally quite adept
in the art of cheating they succeed in
playing upon people's credulity. But
with the advent of the heavenly
Reformer they are exposed and their
counterfeit knowledge of the unseen
becomes unmasked as only a
superficial and fragmentary acquaint-

11. And we know not whether evil is intended for those who are in the earth or whether their Lord intends guidance for them.⁴⁴⁰⁴

وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدَ بِمَنٍ فِي
الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا^{١١}

12. And some of us are righteous and some of us are otherwise; and we are sects following different paths.⁴⁴⁰⁵

وَأَنَّا مِنَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ^{١٢}
كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ قَدَدًا^{١٢}

13. And we know that we cannot frustrate *the plan of* Allah in the earth,^a nor can we escape Him by flight.

وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نُعْجِزَ اللَّهَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَلَنْ نُّعْجِزَهُ هَرَبًا^{١٣}

14.^b And when we heard the *Call to* guidance, we believed in it. And he who believes in his Lord has no fear of loss or injustice.

وَأَنَّا لَمَّا سَمِعْنَا الْهُدَىٰ آمَنَّا بِهِ^{١٤}
فَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا
وَلَا رَهَقًا^{١٤}

^a55:34. ^b46:32.

ance with astrology. For a detailed explanation, however, of this and the preceding verse see 15:17.19 and 37:7-8.

The word الآن (now) is used here particularly with respect to the time of the Holy Prophet, but it may also signify the time of every great Divine Reformer.

4404. Commentary:

Whereas before the appearance of a Divine Reformer, soothsayers and diviners ply their evil trade of prying into the unknown with impunity, with the appearance of such a one they practically confess their lack of knowledge of the unseen by giving up their evil practices. It is not given

to these people to foretell what great changes in the world are decreed to take place. On the other hand, only God's great Messengers can foretell the future.

4405. Important Words:

قَدَدًا (sects following different paths) is the plural of قِدَّة (qiddatun) which is derived from قَد. They say قَدَسَ i.e. he cut it or cut it entirely, rent it. قَدَسَ means, pieces of a thing; parties, divisions, sects or distinct bodies or classes of men, holding particular tenets or body of tenets, creeds, opinions. صَاءُ الْقَوْمِ قَدَدًا means, the people became divided into their states or conditions and their desires or erroneous opinions (Lane & Aqrab).

15. And some of us submit to God and some of us have deviated from the right course.” And those who submit to God—it is these who seek the right course.

16. And as for those who deviate from the right course, they are the fuel of Hell.

17. ^aAnd if they keep to the right path, We shall certainly provide them with abundant water to drink.⁴⁴⁰⁶

18. That We may try them thereby. ^bAnd whoso turns away from the remembrance of his Lord—He will drive him into an overwhelmingly severe punishment.⁴⁴⁰⁷

19. ^cAnd all places of worship belong to Allah; so call not on anyone beside Allah.^{4407A}

وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِنَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ^ط
فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُولَئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا رَشَدًا^{١٥}

وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ
حَطَبًا^{١٦}

وَإِنْ لَّوِ اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ
لَأَسْقِينَهُمْ مَاءً غَدَقًا^{١٧}

لِنَقْتَبَهُمْ فِيهِ^ط وَمَنْ يَعْزِضْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ
رَبِّهِ يَسْلُكْهُ عَذَابًا صَعَدًا^{١٨}

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ
أَحَدًا^{١٩}

^a46:33. ^b20:101; 43:37. ^c2:115; 22:41.

4406. Important Words:

غَدَقًا (abundant) is infinitive-noun from غَدَقَ (ghadiqa). They say غَدَقَتِ الْعَيْنُ i.e. the spring or fountain abounded with water. غَدَقَتِ الْأَرْضُ means, the land abounded with herbage (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse points out that if people had accepted the Divine Message and had kept to the right path, God would have bestowed upon them worldly gifts and benefits in abundance.

Water being the source of all life, "abundant water" signifies abundance of wealth and other material gains.

4407. Commentary:

Wealth is a source of great trial and temptation. Instead of being grateful to God for His bestowing riches upon them, wealthy people generally are neglectful of their duties to God and man.

4407A. Commentary:

In the foregoing verses it is

20. ^aAnd when the Servant of Allah stands up praying to Him, they crowd upon him, well-nigh suffocating him. ⁴⁴⁰⁸ وَأَنَّهُ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُوا يَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا ۖ

R. 2.

21. Say, 'I pray to my Lord only, and I associate no one with Him.'^b قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَدْعُوا رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِهِ أَحَدًا ۝

22. Say, 'I have no power to do you either harm or good.'^c قُلْ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشَدًا ۝

23. Say, 'Surely none can protect me against Allah, nor can I find any place of refuge besides Him.'^c قُلْ إِنِّي لَنْ يُجِيرَنِي مِنَ اللَّهِ أَحَدٌ ۚ وَلَنْ أَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُتْتَحِدًا ۝

24. *My responsibility is only to convey what is revealed to me from Allah, and His Messages.'* إِلَّا بَلَاغًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِسَالَةً ۖ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۝

^dAnd for those who disobey Allah and His Messenger there is the fire of Hell, wherein they will abide for a long, long period.

^a96:10-11. ^b13:37; 18:39. ^c18:28. ^d4:15.

declared that with the advent of the Holy Prophet, God's plan with regard to the establishment of His Unity has become manifest. The verse under comment states that mosques would henceforth be the centres from which the light of truth will emanate and spread throughout the world.

4408. Important Words:

لَبَدًا (crowd upon him suffocating) is derived from لَبَد. They say لَبَدٌ بِالْمَكَانِ i.e. he remained, stayed, continued to

dwell in the house لَبَدُ الشَّيْءِ بِالشَّيْءِ means, the things became heaped one upon the other. لَبَد (labida) also means, he (a camel) became choked and suffered from a contortion in the chest and the throat (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

"The Servant of Allah" refers to the Holy Prophet, he being God's servant par excellence. These words may equally be applied to every Divine Messenger or Reformer. Whenever

25. ^a*They will continue to disbelieve until they see that which they are promised, and soon they will know who is weaker as regards helpers and fewer as regards numbers.*⁴⁴⁰⁹

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ
مَنْ أَضْعَفُ نَاصِرًا وَأَقَلُّ عَدَدًا ﴿٢٥﴾

26. ^b*Say, 'I know not whether that which you are promised is nigh or whether my Lord has fixed for it a distant term.'*⁴⁴¹⁰

قُلْ إِنِّي أَدْرِي مَا تُوعَدُونَ أَمْ
يَجْعَلُ لَهُ رَبِّي أَمَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27. ^c*He is the Knower of the unseen: and He reveals not His secrets to anyone,*⁴⁴¹¹

عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ
أَحَدًا ﴿٢٧﴾

28. Except to him whom He chooses, namely a Messenger of *His*. And then He causes an

إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ
مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا ﴿٢٨﴾

^a19:76. ^b21:110. ^c3:180.

such a one calls men to God and invites them to give up their evil ways and adopt the path of virtue and righteousness, the sons of darkness place all sorts of obstacles and impediments in his way and harass him in every conceivable manner in order to stifle and smother his voice.

4409. Commentary:

Relying on their power, prestige and great numbers the Meccans rejected the Divine Message. They are warned here that when punishment will come upon them, these things will not in the least avail them. The punishment took the form of the Fall of Mecca.

4410. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is enjoined to say to disbelievers that it is not for him to say when the threatened punishment will be, but come it must.

4411. Commentary:

أُظْهِرَ (reveals) is aorist from يُظْهِرُ which means, he made it manifest, evident; he showed, discovered or revealed it. أَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ means, God made him to know it. أَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْعَدُوِّ means, God made him to overcome or prevail over or gain mastery over his enemy (Lane). In view of literal meaning of the word إظهار, the expression إظهار على الغيب means, being given very frequently knowledge of the secrets of the unknown that relate

escort of guarding angels to go before him and behind him,⁴⁴¹²

29. That He may know that they (Divine Messengers) have delivered the Messages of their Lord. And He encompasses *all* that is with them and He keeps count of all things.⁴⁴¹³

يَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ أَبْلَغُوا رَسُولَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ
وَاحَاطَ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَحْصَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ
عَدَدًا ۝
ع ٢
١٢

to and concern events of the greatest import. See also next verse.

4412. Commentary:

The verse embodies an incontestable criterion to distinguish between the nature and scope of the secrets of the unknown that are revealed to a Divine Messenger and those that are disclosed to other righteous believers. The distinction lies in the fact that whereas God's Messengers are granted إظهار على الغيب i.e. predominance over the unseen; secrets revealed to other righteous and holy men of God do not enjoy this distinction. Moreover, revelation granted to God's Messengers, being under special Divine protection, is

completely secure against being distorted or tampered with by the evil one, while secrets revealed to ordinary righteous men are not so safe.

4413. Commentary:

The revelation of Divine Messengers is granted security against being distorted or tampered with, because they have a great divine mission to fulfil and a great heavenly Message to deliver. It is also intended that people should realize that the Prophets would succeed in their mission and that obstacles and impediments placed in their way by disbelievers could not arrest or retard its progress.

CHAPTER 73

AL-MUZZAMMIL

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introductory Remarks

A consensus of scholarly opinion assigns the revelation of this *Sūrah* to the earliest period of the Call; some consider it to be the third chapter to be revealed. It receives its title from the opening verse.

In the preceding *Sūrah* (Al-Jinn) it was stated that angels descend upon Divine Messengers to guard the Word of God revealed to them from being distorted or tampered with. In the present *Sūrah* the Holy Prophet is enjoined to devote a part of the night to Prayer and the remembrance of God so that angels may descend upon him to help him against the evil plots and machinations of his enemies.

Like all Meccan *Sūrahs*, this *Sūrah* also deals mainly with the divine mission of the Holy Prophet and with the truth of the Quranic revelation. It foretells, in brief but in very graceful words, the eventual triumph of the Holy Prophet and adduces the fulfilment of the prophecy as an argument in support of Life after death and the Resurrection. Particular emphasis has been laid on Prayer and the remembrance of God which was a most effective means to draw Divine help and succour in preparation for the mighty task that lay ahead of the Prophet.



(AL-MUZZAMMIL)

1. "In the name of Allah, the
Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. O thou wrapped in *thy* mantle
awaiting the grace of God 4414

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ ②

^aSee 1:1.

4414. Important Words:

المزمل (wrapped in mantle) is derived from the root زمَلَ which means, he ran and went along quickly. زمَله means, he bore or carried it, namely, a load. زمَله على البعير means, be made him to ride behind him on the camel so as to counterbalance him. زمَله في ثوبه means, he wrapped him in his garment. تَزَمَلَ means, he wrapped himself. مَزْمَلَ (ordinarily مَزْمَلَ) means, a man wrapped in his garments; one bearing a heavy responsibility (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In view of different significations of the word مَزْمَلَ the verse has been variously interpreted. The simple explanation is the one given in Bukhārī. After his first spiritual experience when the angel of God came to the Holy Prophet with Divine revelation he rushed home very much frightened. The fright was quite natural because the experience was quite novel. The Prophet asked to be wrapped in a mantle. As wrapping also implies the sense of joining together and uniting, the meaning of the verse may be something like this, "O thou who art to unite the nations of the world under one banner!" The Holy Prophet has been described in

the Ḥadīth as الحَاشِر i.e. the Joiner and Uniter of the nations of the world (Bukhārī, *Kitāb Manāqibun-Nabī*).

Applying the other root meanings of زمَلَ given under Important Words, it may be said: (1) That the Holy Prophet is described in the verse as one who has to go a long distance on the road to awaken humanity to the realization of its high destiny, and therefore he has to run fast i.e. work hard, incessantly and fast. (2) That he is one who is to carry a heavy load, a very great responsibility of preaching the Divine Message to the world. (3) That the Holy Prophet may have been reminded of his onerous task of preparing a community of God-fearing followers, who, imbued with the same noble ideals and fired with the same unflagging zeal as himself, should help him to convey to mankind the Message of Islam. زمَلَ also means to make another person ride behind oneself on the camel so as to maintain balance. It is to the onerous duties and responsibilities of the Holy Prophet and to his high status as a Divine teacher that in reality reference has been made in the verse under comment, and not to his being wrapped in his mantle. From the time

3. "Stand up *in Prayer* at night except a small portion thereof—
4415

قُمِ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝٣

4. Half of it, or reduce it a little

نُصْفَهُ أَوْ انْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ۝٤

5. Or add to it *a little*—^b and the Quran, a good recital. 4416

أَوْزِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ۝٥

6. Verily, We shall charge thee with a weighty Word. 4417

إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ۝٦

^a17:80; 50:41; 52:50; 76:27. ^b17:107; 25:33.

be received this revelation, the Holy Prophet's life was not his own. It became dedicated to God and mankind.

4415. Commentary:

In this and the next verse the Holy Prophet is told that praying to God in the stillness of the night will prepare him for the heavy task entrusted to him.

4416. Important Words:

رتل (recite) is derived from رتل (ratila). They say رتل الشيء i.e. the thing was or became well arranged. رتل الثغیر means, the front teeth were or became even in their growth or separated one from another; were well set together and were white and lustrous. رتل الكلام (rattala) means, he put together and arranged well the component parts of the speech and made it distinct. ترتیل in its original sense relates to the teeth, signifying their being separated one from the other, and when used with regard to a speech it signifies, putting together and arranging well its component parts and making it distinct. رتل القرآن means, I recited the Quran in a leisurely manner, deliberately, distinctly and well (Lane

& Aqrab).

4417. Commentary:

قولا ثقیلا may have any one of the following meanings: (a) The Quran is pregnant with the highest import. (b) It is too heavy to be displaced or dislocated i.e. the Quranic Teaching will continue to guide mankind and no other teaching would ever take its place or improve upon it. (c) No word or letter of the Quran could be changed, altered or amended. (d) The Quran will break all opposition and (e) no single book or a collection of books could encompass all the knowledge contained in it. Briefly, the collective and concerted effort of all mankind will not be able to produce a Book like the Quran.

According to an oft-quoted ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet, whenever a revelation descended upon him, went into a trance and felt a peculiar sensation so that even on an extremely cold day big drops of sweat fell from his forehead and he felt a dead weight of his body (Bukhārī). The Quranic revelation being "a weighty word", his

7. Verily, getting up at night for prayer is the most potent means of subduing *the self* and most effective in speech.⁴⁴¹⁸

إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَظًا
وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا ۝٧

8. Thou hast indeed, during the day, *a long chain of engagements*.⁴⁴¹⁹

إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا ۝٨

paroxysm was due to this sensation.

4418. Important Words:

وطئ (subduing) is derived from وطئ. They say وطئ الشيء i.e. he trod under foot the thing. وطئ الفرس means, he mounted the horse. وطئ أرض عدوه means, he entered the enemy's land (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Getting up in the night for Prayer is a potent means of subduing one's self and of bringing under effective control one's evil propensities and inclinations. It is a proven experience of all spiritual wayfarers and holy men that nothing conduces to one's spiritual development so much as Prayers at night. In the stillness and solitude of night, a peculiar sort of peace prevails and all nature is quiet, and man, being all alone with his Creator, enjoys special communion with Him, and becomes illumined with a special heavenly light which he imparts to others. The time is eminently suited for man to develop strength of character and to make his speech sane, solid and sound. Effective speech and infinite capacity for hard work are two very necessary qualifications for a Reformer to succeed in his mission, Prayer at

night helps in the development of these two qualities. Having acquired control over one's mind and tongue one comes to exercise control over others. This is the significance of the verse under comment. The verse may also mean that Night Prayer causes the actions of man to correspond to his words, which constitutes another sure sign of the strength of his character and the sincerity of his heart.

4419. Important Words:

سبحاً (long chain of engagements) is derived from سبح. They say سبح في الماء i.e. he swam in the water and took pleasure in it. سبح في الأرض means, he went far into the land. سبح في حوائجه means, he busied himself in the accomplishment of his needs. سبح (sabhun) also signifies the running of a horse in which the forelegs are stretched forth well as are the arms of a man in swimming; being quick or swift (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to the multifarious duties of the Holy Prophet which he performed with alacrity and took pleasure in doing them. As Head of a newly-established Republic, surrounded on all sides by bitter foes and beset with the plots and machinations of internal enemies,

9. So remember the name of thy Lord, and devote *thyself* to Him with full devotion. **4420**

وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتَلًا ۝٩

10. ^aHe is the Lord of the East and the West; there is no God but He; so take Him for thy Guardian. **4421**

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ۝١٠

11. And bear patiently all that they say; and part with them in a decent manner.

وَاصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ۝١١

12. ^bAnd leave Me alone with those who reject *the truth*, possessors of ease and plenty; and give them a little respite. **4422**

وَذَرْنِي وَالْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُولِيَ النَّعْمَةِ وَمَهْلَهُمْ قَلِيلًا ۝١٢

^a26:29; 37:6. ^b68:45; 74:12.

and as a Divine teacher and Reformer who had to prepare a community, which was unacquainted with even the rudiments of knowledge, to become the leaders of nations in civilization and culture, the Prophet's task was indeed very difficult, which can better be imagined than described, but which he performed with a success which has baffled the world.

4420. Important Words:

تبتل (devote) is derived from بتل (battala). They say بتله i.e. he severed it or separated it from another thing. بتل الى الله means, he detached himself from worldly things and devoted himself exclusively and sincerely to the service of God. يتول means, a woman detached from worldly things and entirely devoted to God (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In this verse the Holy Prophet is told that he could accomplish his heavy task of reforming a corrupt community and preparing it for the leadership of the world by devoting himself completely to God.

4421. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is told here again that while preaching his divine mission he will meet with bitter opposition and persecution. Therefore, he should, on the one hand, put his full trust in God, the Lord of the East and the West, and, on the other, bear with patience and fortitude the jibes, opposition and persecution of his enemies.

4422. Commentary:

Rejecters of truth are reprimanded that instead of being grateful to God

13. Surely, with Us are *heavy* fetters and a raging fire,⁴⁴²³

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾

14. And food that chokes, and a painful punishment ⁴⁴²⁴

وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٤﴾

15. On the day when the earth and the mountains shall quake,^a and the mountains will become like crumbling sandhills.⁴⁴²⁵

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ
الْجِبَالُ كَثِيبًا مَّهِيلًا ﴿١٥﴾

16. Verily, We have sent to you a Messenger, who is a witness over you,^b even as We sent a Messenger to Pharaoh.⁴⁴²⁶

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا
عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ
رَسُولًا ﴿١٦﴾

^a56:5-6; 79:7. ^b33:46; 48:9.

for "ease and plenty" provided to them they reject the Divine Message.

4423. Important Words:

أَنْكَالًا (fetters) is the plural of نَكَال which means, fetter, chain, bracelet, necklace; a kind of bridle. نَكَالُ بَقْلَانِ means, he inflicted upon him such a punishment as to make him an example for others (Aqrab).

4424. Important Words:

غُصَّة (choking) is derived from غَض. They say غَضَ بِالْغَيْظِ i.e. he was or became choked with wrath. غَضَ الْمَجْلِسُ means, the sitting place became choked with people. غَضَ also means, he became grieved or disquieted in mind. غُصَّة means, a thing by which one is choked; choking wrath or rage; grief or disquietude of mind (Lane & Aqrab).

4425. Important Words:

كَثِيبًا is derived from كَتَبَ. They say كَتَبَ التُّرَابَ i.e. he scattered dust part over

part. كَثِيب means, a sandhill heaped up by the wind (Lane).

مهيلًا (crumbling) is derived from هَال. They say هَال عَلَيْهِ التُّرَابُ i.e. he put the earth over it. الهِيل which is infinitive noun means, sand that does not remain steady in its place. مهيل means, running sand. كَثِيبُ مَهِيل means, a crumbling sandhill (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to the Day of Resurrection, or to the Day of the Fall of Mecca, or to any calamitous day when catastrophic changes take place and deeply-rooted institutions totter and fall and very powerful and big and influential people are blown away like chaff before the wind.

4426. Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to the following Biblical prophecy about the appearance among the Ishmaelites of a great Prophet of God like unto Moses:

17. But Pharaoh disobeyed the Messenger,^a so We seized him with a terrible punishment.

فَقَصَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ الرَّسُولَ فَأَخَذْنَاهُ أَخْذًا
وَبِئْسَ ۝١٧

18. How will you then, if you disbelieve, guard yourselves against a day which will turn children grey-headed? **4427**

فَكَيْفَ تَتَّقُونَ إِن كَفَرْتُمْ يَوْمًا
يَجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانَ شِيبًا ۝١٨

19. ^bOn that day the heaven will be rent asunder and His promise is bound to be fulfilled. **4428**

السَّمَاءُ مُنْفَطِرٌ بِهِ ۚ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ
مَفْعُولًا ۝١٩

20. This, surely, is a reminder.^c So let him, who will, take a way unto his Lord. **4429**

إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ ۚ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ
إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ۝٢٠

^a20:79; 26:67; 28:41. ^b82:2. ^c20:4; 74:55; 76:30; 80:12.

"I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My word in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him" (Deut. 18:18-19).

4427. Commentary:

"Turning children grey-headed" in the present verse, "grinding asunder of the heaven" in the next, "rolling up of heaven" in 21:105, and similar expressions used in the Quran (81:12; 82:2 & 84:2) are metaphors for most calamitous happenings which bring about disastrous changes. The reference in this and in the next verse and also in verse 15 above is to the Day of Resurrection or the Day of the

Fall of Mecca. See also v. 15.

4428. Commentary:

The promise referred to in the verse was the total defeat and destruction of the forces of evil followed by the triumph of Islam which was fully manifested in the Fall of Mecca, when the old corrupt order died and from its ruins emerged a new and better order. This may be the meaning of the words, "the heaven will be rent asunder."

4429. Commentary:

The verse contains an invincible argument in support of the Divine origin of the Quranic revelation. The *Sūrah* was one of the earliest two or three chapters revealed at Mecca at a time when the Holy Prophet himself perhaps had no very clear idea of the momentous significance of his

R. 2.

21. Surely, thy Lord, knows that ^athou standest up *praying* for nearly two-thirds of the night, and *sometimes* half or a third thereof, ^band also a party of those who are with thee. And Allah determines the measure of the night and the day. He knows that you cannot keep its *measure*, so He has turned to you in mercy. Recite, then, as much of the Quran as is easy *for you*. He knows that there will be some among you who may be sick and others who may travel in the land seeking Allah's bounty, and others who may fight in the cause of Allah. So recite of it that which is easy *for you*, and observe Prayer, and pay the Zakah, ^cand lend to Allah a goodly loan. ^dAnd whatever good you send on before you for your souls, you

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِنْ ثُلَاثِ
الَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُ وَثُلَاثُهُ وَطَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ
مَعَكَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ۚ عَلِمَ أَن
لَّنْ تَحْصُوهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا
يَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ ۗ عَلِمَ أَن سَيَكُونُ مِنْكُمْ
مَّرْضَىٰ ۖ وَآخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
يَبْتَغُونَ مِن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَآخَرُونَ
يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۖ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ
مِنْهُ ۚ وَاقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ
وَاقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا ۚ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا
لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ
خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا ۚ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ ۗ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

ع
١٤

^a26:219. ^b25:65; 41:39. ^c2:246; 57:12; 64:18. ^d2:211.

mission and of the strong opposition and bitter persecution he was to meet with at the hands of those very people who formerly looked upon him as the most trusted and honest man in Mecca. Under the circumstances, it could hardly be imagined that one day Mecca would lay prostrate at his feet and the Quraish leaders would be begging for mercy and forgiveness.

The wildest stretch of human imagination could hardly conceive of such stupendous happenings as have been foretold in the preceding verses; much less could a human being declare in such forceful terms that these prophecies would be fulfilled. The Quran is certainly a Reminder from God.

will find it with Allah. It *will be* better and greater in reward. And seek forgiveness of Allah. Surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful. **4430**

4430. Commentary:

In the opening verse of the *Sūrah* the Holy Prophet was enjoined that he should constantly pray in the night, for this would give him the necessary strength to discharge the grave responsibility of preaching the Divine Message that was shortly going to devolve on him. In the verse under comment he is assured of Divine pleasure, and is told that he has faithfully carried out God's command about the night prayer, not only he, but a party of believers also. The command was not specifically directed to the followers of the Holy Prophet, but being always desirous of following in his footsteps, they copied his example in this respect also.

The sentence "Allah determines the

measure of the night and the day," signifies that sometimes the nights are long and sometimes they are short and sometimes the day and the night are equal.

The words *ان لن تحصى* may apply to Muslims in general. In this sense they are told that all of them would not be able to say the Night Prayer regularly and punctually. Or the words may signify that as Muslims are longing to win God's pleasure and attain nearness to Him, so they should read the Quran thoughtfully. In this way they would acquire knowledge of, and insight into, Divine attributes.

Besides the meaning given in the text, the expression *فاقرؤا ما تيسر منه* may mean: (1) recite of the Quran as much as you possibly can.

CHAPTER 74

AL-MUDDATHTHIR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

By common consent this *Sūrah* was one of the first two or three revealed at Mecca. This and the preceding *Sūrah* (Al-Muzzammil) seem to be "twins" as they are closely linked in regard to the time of revelation and their tone and tenor. The present *Sūrah*, in fact, complements the subject matter of its predecessor. The *مزمّل* (*Muzzammil*) of the previous *Sūrah*, immersed in devotional prayers and contemplation, and passing through a period of intense preparation for the attainment of spiritual perfection, had developed from that into *مدثر* (*Muddaththir*) i.e. the Destroyer of sin and Vanquisher of the forces of evil, the Deliverer of mankind, their Leader, Guide and Warner. From that time onward, the Prophet's life was no more his own. It was devoted to God, and to mankind. He preached Divine Message with unswerving purpose, in the face of insult, opposition and persecution.

The *Sūrah* opens with a firm command to the Holy Prophet to stand upright, proclaim the truth he has and warn those who would not accept it—those whom wealth, power and position had rendered spiritually blind and deaf that the day of Divine punishment would be a day of extreme distress for them; they would burn in the fire of Hell. They are further told that they would suffer punishment because they did not offer prayers or feed the poor—duties which they owed to God, and man—and because also they ignored the Divine Message and indulged in vain pursuits, persisting in the denial of the Day of Judgement till death overtook them. The *Sūrah* ends on the note that the Quran is but a Reminder and an Exhortation. He who will accept its Message will accept it for the betterment of his own soul and he who will reject it, would do so to his own detriment.



(AL-MUDDATHTHIR)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. O thou who hast covered thyself with a cloak, ⁴⁴³¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ ②

3. Arise and warn. ⁴⁴³²

قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ ③

4. And thy Lord do thou magnify.

وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ④

^aSee 1:1.

4431. Important Words:

المدثر (one who has covered himself with a cloak) is derived from دثر which means, it (a trace or mark) became effaced or obliterated. تدثر أو ادثر (*tadaththara* or *iddaththara*) means, he wrapped himself with a garment. دثره (*daththara*) means, he destroyed or obliterated him or it; he covered him with a warm garment. دثر الطائر (*daththara*) means, the bird adjusted, or put in order, its nest. تدثر الفرس means, he leaped upon and rode the horse. تدثر العدو means, he vanquished the enemy (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

According to the different meanings of the root word, المدثر would mean: the effacer or obliterator; the reformer or the one who adjusts or puts things in order; the vanquisher; the one who is ready to leap upon and ride the horse. The word has also been interpreted as one entrusted with bearing the heavy load of the responsibilities of a Prophet (Qadīr).

The word also means, one adorned with the best human natural powers and qualities and prophetic dignity (Rūḥul-Ma‘ānī). All these epithets fully apply to the Holy Prophet. Traditions show that after a few verses of the *Sūrah* had been revealed, further revelation ceased for several months (Bukhārī). As revelation was a novel spiritual experience for the Holy Prophet, its cessation was intended to make the fright that had affected his mind wear away, and to attune him with the majesty and dignity of the Divine Word.

4432. Commentary:

Being fully prepared by devotional Prayers, deep contemplation, and long night vigils for the onerous task of reforming the world, the *Muzzammil* becomes the *Muddaththir* i.e. the leader and guide of mankind; and is commanded to rise up and proclaim the Divine Message and warn its rejecters of the evil consequences of rejection.

5. And thyself do thou
purify.⁴⁴³³

وَتِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ ۖ

6. And uncleanness do thou
shun,⁴⁴³⁴

وَالرَّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ ۖ

7. And bestow not favours
seeking to get more in
return,⁴⁴³⁵

وَلَا تَمْنُنْ تَسْتَكْثِرُ ۖ

8. And for the sake of thy Lord
do thou endure trials
patiently.⁴⁴³⁶

وَلِرَبِّكَ فَاصْبِرْ ۖ

4433. Important Words:

ثياب (garments) is plural of ثوب which means, a garment. The Arabs say, فلان نقي الثوب i.e. such a one is pure in heart, conduct or reputation. دنس الثوب means, vicious or perfidious; طاهر الثياب means, a righteous man who does good works. ثياب means, clothes; dependants or followers of a person; weapons. It also means, the wearer's body or self. They say خلى ثيابك عن ثيابي i.e. separate thyself from me. It also signifies, a person's works. ان الميت ليبعث في ثيابه التي يموت فيها means, the dead man will be raised according to the works with which his life ended (Lane, Aqrab & Steingass).

Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is enjoined that before entering upon his great mission he should prepare a body of followers, pure of heart, conduct and reputation. Or the verse may mean that he should himself be a paragon of piety, righteousness and pure conduct.

4434. Commentary:

الرجز meaning idol worship (Lane) the verse may be taken as enjoining

the Holy Prophet to spare no pains to exterminate idolatry. Idol worship is the basic sin, but it takes different forms with different people, for instance, worship of idols made of wood or stone; worship of human beings; worship of one's desires, of old customs, usages, etc.

4435. Commentary:

God's Prophets serve, and suffer for, their peoples out of no motive other than sincere concern and solicitude for their moral and spiritual well-being. "I ask of you no reward for it. My reward is only with the Lord of the worlds." (26:110), has always been the motto which has prompted and guided their noble efforts to redeem their peoples from the bondage of sin.

4436. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is told in this verse that he will be opposed and persecuted by the forces of evil as the result of his missionary efforts. He should, therefore, be ready to bear all opposition and persecution with patience and fortitude, and with a loving and sympathetic heart.

9. ^aAnd when the trumpet is sounded,⁴⁴³⁷

فَإِذَا نُقِرَ فِي النَّاقُورِ ۝٩

10. ^bThat day will be a distressful day.⁴⁴³⁸

فَذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ مِّمَّذٍ يَوْمٌ عَسِيرٌ ۝١٠

11. For the disbelievers it will not be easy.

عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ غَيْرُ يَسِيرٍ ۝١١

12. ^cLeave Me to deal with him whom I created alone.⁴⁴³⁹

ذَرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ۝١٢

13. ^dAnd *then* I gave him abundant wealth,

وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَّمْدُودًا ۝١٣

14. ^eAnd sons abiding in *his* presence,⁴⁴⁴⁰

وَبَنِينَ شُهُودًا ۝١٤

^a23:102; 50:21; 69:14. ^b25:27. ^c68:45; 73:12. ^d68:15. ^e68:15.

4437. Commentary:

The words "When the trumpet is sounded" may mean; "When the hour of punishment of disbelievers arrives." The reference may be to the Fall of Mecca, when the Meccans, as if summoned by a bugle, stood as criminals before the Holy Prophet. Or, the verse may mean; when a Divine Reformer who is a Bugle by which God summons men to Himself makes his appearance and calls men to God. Or the verse may refer to the Holy Prophet's own call to his people.

4438. Commentary:

"A distressful day" signifies the Day of Resurrection or the day of the final defeat of disbelief and the complete triumph of Truth. This and the following several verses (vv. 10-30) give a graphic description of the great material benefits which the enemies of Truth enjoy and as a consequence of which they reject the Divine Message, incurring punishment in this world and in the Hereafter.

4439. Commentary:

The verse, besides the translation given in the text, may mean: "Leave Me alone to deal with him whom I created," or "leave Me to deal with him who, on account of the great wealth, power and position God has bestowed upon him thinks himself to be peerless among his compatriots, وحيد meaning unique, incomparable."

Though the verse applies to every arrogant and conceited disbeliever, it may particularly apply to Walīd bin Mughīrah. He was an outstanding personality among the Quraish, and was known among his fellow citizens by such high sounding titles as وحيد (unique) and ريحان قريش (fragrance of the Quraish). He was extremely handsome and was well known for his elegant poems and other accomplishments. He had 10 to 13 sons and was a very rich man.

4440. Commentary:

The verse means that Mughīrah's

15. And I prepared for him all necessary things.

وَمَهَّدْتُ لَهُ تَمَهِيدًا ۝١٥

16. Yet he desires that I should give *him* more.

ثُمَّ يَظْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ۝١٦

17. Certainly not! for he was opposed to Our Signs.⁴⁴⁴¹

كَلَّا إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِإِيْتَا عَيْنِدَا ۝١٧

18. I shall soon impose on him an overwhelming hardship.

سَأُرْهِقُهُ صَعُودًا ۝١٨

19. Lo! he reflected and calculated!

إِنَّهُ فَكَّرَ وَقَدَّرَ ۝١٩

20. Ruin seize him! how he calculated!⁴⁴⁴²

فَقَتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۝٢٠

21. Ruin seize him again! how he calculated!

ثُمَّ قَتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۝٢١

22. Then he looked,

ثُمَّ نَظَرَ ۝٢٢

23. "Then he frowned and scowled,⁴⁴⁴³

ثُمَّ عَبَسَ وَبَسَرَ ۝٢٣

24. Then he turned away and was disdainful.

ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ۝٢٤

^a80:2.

sons also commanded respect like him. They, too, were offered a distinguished place in the assemblies which he attended. Or, Mughīrah was so rich that his sons always kept company with him; not wanting to go anywhere to earn their living.

4441. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that disbelievers entertain very high ambitions but those ambitions shall not materialize. On the contrary, they shall be punished; the particle *ثُمَّ* being used to reject the request of a person and to reprimand him for

making it (Lane).

4442. Commentary:

Ruin seized Walīd bin Mughīrah. Three of his sons, viz. Walīd, Khālīd and Hishām accepted Islam, others perished before his eyes. He suffered heavy financial losses and ultimately died in poverty and disgrace.

4443. Commentary:

When the Quran was read to him, Mughīrah being himself a poet of distinction, said that it was not poetry, nor was the Prophet a liar, but only a magician. He frowned and scowled in

25. And said, ^a“This is nothing but magic handed down;

فَقَالَ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ يُورَثُ ۝٢٥

26. This is nothing but the word of man.’

إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ ۝٢٦

27. Soon shall I cast him into the Fire of Hell.^b

سَأُصْلِيهِ سَقَرَ ۝٢٧

28. And what will make thee know what Hellfire is?

وَمَا أَذْرِيكَ مَا سَقَرُ ۝٢٨

29. *It* spares not and *it* leaves naught.

لَا تَبْقَىٰ وَلَا تَذَرُ ۝٢٩

30. ^c*It* scorches the face.

لَوَاحٍ لِّلْبَشَرِ ۝٣٠

31. Over it are nineteen angels.⁴⁴⁴⁴

عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ ۝٣١

32. And none but angels have We made wardens of the Fire. And We have not fixed their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve, so that those who have been given the Book may attain certainty and those who believe may increase in faith, and those who have

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ إِلَّا مَلَائِكَةً ۖ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عِدَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيَسْتَيَقِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَيَزْدَادَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِيمَانًا وَلَا يَرْتَابَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ

^a11:8; 34:44; 37:16. ^b37:24. ^c70:17.

disdain and went away in high huff.

4444. Commentary:

"Nineteen", may refer here to man's natural powers and faculties which, according to some *Sufis* or mystics are nineteen in number. Proper use of these faculties or powers helps a person's spiritual development while their misuse causes his moral death. In consonance with these nineteen faculties, which constitute the real

source or instrument of a man's good or bad actions, nineteen angels will be appointed to cleanse the guilty of their sins; each angel being entrusted with the duty of cleansing sins committed through one particular faculty. In fact, Hell as conceived by the Quran is a purgatory where the human soul, after being cured of its spiritual maladies, will resume uniform spiritual development.

been given the Book as well as the believers may not doubt, and that those in whose hearts is disease and the disbelievers may say, 'What does Allah mean by such an illustration?'^a Thus does Allah adjudge astray whom He pleases and guide whom He pleases. ^bAnd none knows the hosts of thy Lord but He. And this is nothing but a Reminder for man.⁴⁴⁴⁵

R. 2.

33. Nay, by the moon,

34. And by the night when it retreats,

35. ^cAnd by the dawn when it shines forth,⁴⁴⁴⁶

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۖ وَلَيَقُولَنَّ الَّذِينَ فِي
قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ وَالْكَافِرُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ
اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا ۖ كَذَلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ
يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُودَ
رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَمَا هِيَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ
لِلْبَشَرِ ۚ

كَلَّا وَالْقَمَرَ ۚ

وَالَّيْلَ إِذَا دَبَّرَ ۚ

وَالصُّبْحَ إِذَا اسْفَرَّ ۚ

^a13:28; 14:5. ^b33:10; 48:5. ^c81:19.

4445. Commentary:

The apparently enigmatic "nineteen" may concern some great Divine design or purpose which, when unfolded, will, on the one hand, greatly add to the faith of the believers and, on the other, to the embarrassment and mental confusion of the disbelievers and of "those in whose heart is disease." Otherwise the number of God's angels is legion, beyond human count or computation, just as the stages of man's spiritual progress in the Hereafter are numberless.

4446. Commentary:

This and the preceding two verses

name the things mentioned therein as evidence to prove the Divine origin of the Quranic revelation and of the Holy Prophet's claim as God's Messenger—the two principal themes dealt with in this as in all other Meccan *Sūrah*s revealed in the early years of the Call. These things are the "moon," the "retreating night" and the "bright dawn." The "moon" may signify the Promised Messiah who, after borrowing heavenly light from the Holy Prophet had to spread it in the world; the "retreating night" may mean the night of spiritual darkness that would begin to retreat after the appearance of the Promised Messiah,

36. ^aVerily, it is one of the greatest calamities.⁴⁴⁴⁷

إِنَّهَا لِأَحَدَى الْكُبَرَى ۝

37. A warning to man,

نَذِيرًا لِلْبَشَرِ ۝

38. To him among you who wishes to advance in virtue or hang back.⁴⁴⁴⁸

لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَتَقَدَّمَ أَوْ يَتَأَخَّرَ ۝

39. ^bEvery soul is pledged for what it has earned;⁴⁴⁴⁹

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ ۝

40. Except those on the right hand.^c

إِلَّا أَصْحَابَ الْيَمِينِ ۝

41. They will be in Gardens enquiring

عَنِ الْمُتَلَذِّثِينَ

فِي جَنَّاتٍ يُتَسَاءَلُونَ ۝

42. From the guilty ones,⁴⁴⁵⁰

عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝

43. 'What has brought you into the Fire of Hell?'

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ ۝

^a79:35. ^b14:52; 40:18; 45:23. ^c56:28; 69:20; 90:19.

and the "bright dawn" may signify his advent.

4447. Commentary:

The verse means that the rejection of the Holy Prophet is one of the greatest calamities that can befall man.

4448. Commentary:

The Message of Islam is intended equally for all men—for those who seek to develop their spiritual self and win God's pleasure as well as for those who would wish to cling to the world.

4449. Important Words:

رهينة (is pledged) is derived from

رهن. They say رهن الشيء عند فلان i.e. he deposited the thing with him to be in lieu of that which he had taken or received from him; he deposited the thing with him as a security for a debt (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that every soul shall remain in pledge unless it will have paid for the sins it had committed, i.e. unless it will have been cleansed of sins after suffering punishment for them.

4450. Commentary:

The particle عن also means, 'from' (Lane).

44. They will say, ‘We were not of those who offered Prayers,^a

45. Nor did we feed the poor^b.⁴⁴⁵¹

46. ‘And we indulged in idle talk with those who indulge therein.

47. And we used to deny the Day of Judgement,^c

48. Until death overtook us^d.⁴⁴⁵²

49. So the intercession of intercessors will not avail them.^e ^{4452A}

50. Now what is the matter with them that they are turning away from the Exhortation,

51. As if they were frightened asses

52. Fleeing from a lion?

قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمَصْلِينَ ۝٤٤

وَلَمْ نَكُ نَظْعُمُ الْمِسْكِينَ ۝٤٥

وَكُنَّا نَحُورُ مَعَ الْخَاطِئِينَ ۝٤٦

وَكُنَّا نَكْذِبُ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ۝٤٧

حَتَّىٰ آتَانَا الْيَقِينَ ۝٤٨

فَمَا تَتَّعِبُهُمْ شِفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ ۝٤٩

فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ التَّذْكَرَةِ مُعْرِضِينَ ۝٥٠

كَأَنَّهُمْ حُمُرٌ مُسْتَنْفَرَةٌ ۝٥١

فَرَّتْ مِنْ قَسْوَرَةٍ ۝٥٢

^a75:32. ^b69:35; 89:19; 107:4. ^c75:33. ^d15:100. ^e20:110; 34:24.

4451. Commentary:

Offering of Prayers and feeding the poor constitute the two pillars on which the whole edifice of Islam stands. They represent man’s duties to God and to his fellow beings.

4452. Important Words:

يقن (death) is derived from يقن. They say يقن الامر i.e. the matter became clear and established. يقن به or يقنه means, he knew it; he was or became certain or sure or he made sure of it, intuitively and inferentially. يقين

means, certainty; security (Lane & Aqrab). It also means, death, because death is as certain as anything.

4452A. Commentary:

The verse means that nobody will dare intercede for disbelievers, their sins of omission and commission being many and of a heinous character. Elsewhere the Quran says that sinners will not be allowed to approach near the threshold of God, i.e. they will be completely denied God’s grace.

53. Nay, every man among them desires to have open sheets of revelation given to him.⁴⁴⁵³

بَلْ يَرِيدُ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُؤْتَى
صُحُفًا مَنشُورَةً ﴿٥٣﴾

54. Never! verily, they fear not the Hereafter.⁴⁴⁵⁴

كَلَّا ۖ بَلْ لَا يَخَافُونَ الْآخِرَةَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55. Never! verily this is an exhortation.⁴⁴⁵⁵

كَلَّا إِنَّهُ تَذَكُّرٌ ﴿٥٥﴾

56. Let him, then, who will, remember it.

فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَرْهُ ﴿٥٦﴾

57. And they will not remember unless Allah so please^a He alone is worthy to be feared and He alone is worthy to forgive.⁴⁴⁵⁶

وَمَا يَذْكُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ
هُوَ أَهْلُ التَّقْوَىٰ وَأَهْلُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ ﴿٥٧﴾

^a18:25; 76:31; 81:30.

4453. Commentary:

The reference here may be to the impudent demand of disbelievers mentioned elsewhere in the Quran, viz. that they would not believe unless God spoke to them direct (2:119), or unless the Prophet should bring down a Book for them from heaven which they could read (17:94).

4454. Commentary:

The disbelievers reject the Divine Message because they have no faith in the Hereafter where they shall have to render an account of their actions.

4455. Commentary:

The demand of disbelievers can never be accepted as the Quran has fully satisfied all needs and requirements of man. It is a Reminder and an Exhortation par excellence,

and through it the nations that will accept its Message and act upon its teaching will rise to great eminence.

4456. Commentary:

The verse may mean, as elsewhere stated, that disbelievers will not benefit by the Quran unless they make their will conform to the will of God, i.e. they subordinate all their desires to the Divine Will (76:31). Or it may signify that it is not possible for man to find the right way unless God sends down His Word for his guidance. The words "He alone is worthy to be feared," mean that we should take God alone as a shield for protection against sins (the root word قى meaning, to guard or shield oneself). Or it may mean, that God alone can grant forgiveness when a man falters or falls.

CHAPTER 75

AL-QIYĀMAH

(Revealed before Hijrah)

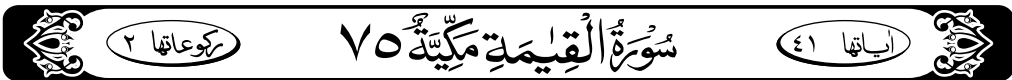
General Remarks

This *Sūrah* takes its title, القيامة (the Resurrection), from the opening verse. It wholly deals with the Resurrection. The *Sūrah* is decidedly one of the earliest chapters which were revealed at Mecca, because the Meccan *Sūrahs* specifically deal with God's Unity, Resurrection and Revelation.

Towards the end of the preceding *Sūrah* it was emphatically stated that those people who will accept the Quranic Message will rise to eminence and will find an honoured place among the comity of great and powerful nations. The present *Sūrah* opening with a discussion of the subject of Resurrection throws a broad hint that a great moral resurrection is going to be brought about among a morally degraded and degenerate people—the Arabs—through the ennobling teachings of the Quran and the purifying example of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* opens with a solemn affirmation that the Resurrection undoubtedly will take place, and significantly enough adduces man's spiritual resurrection, as evidence in support of this affirmation. As a further proof, it swears by نفس لومة i.e. the self-accusing spirit, which in action is the first stage of the process of spiritual regeneration. Then an oft-repeated objection of disbelievers is mentioned, viz. when they are dead and reduced to dust, how will they be raised again to life. The *Sūrah* effectively rebuts this objection by saying that in their heart of hearts they know that man's sins never go unpunished and, therefore, there must be a day when they will be called to account for what they had done in this life. Then the collection of the Quran and the Divine protection of its text are offered as further arguments in the same connection, since of all revealed Scriptures the Quran has laid the greatest emphasis on the inevitability of the Resurrection. Next, a brief but graphic description is given of the agony of death and man's intense desire to be spared of it. This shows that at the moment of death the fear that one will have to render an account of one's actions gnaws at one's heart. Towards the close of the *Sūrah* disbelievers are admonished that man has not been created without a purpose or without responsibility, and that he will have to account for his failure to discharge his duties to God and to his fellow beings. Disbelievers are further reminded that man's physical development from a sperm drop into a full-fledged human being, endowed with unique powers and faculties, constitutes an irrebuttable argument that his creation is intended to serve a sublime purpose and that his life will not end with the departure of the soul from its physical tabernacle.



(AL-QIYĀMAH)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Nay! I call to witness the Day of Resurrection. ⁴⁴⁵⁷

لَا أَقْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ②

3. And I do call to witness the self-accusing soul, *that the Day of Judgement is a certainty.* ⁴⁴⁵⁸

وَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ ③

^aSee 1:1.

4457. Commentary:

For the nature, significance and philosophy of Quranic oaths see detailed notes on 91:2 and 37:2. One object of oaths, however, is to lay emphasis on the importance of the subject about which an oath is taken.

لَا (nay) is used in different senses. Here it may signify, "it is not like what they think." Sometimes, it is used as an answer to some objection or in repudiation of what is said before. In this and the next verse it is used to refute the disbelievers' assertion made in v. 4, about the impossibility of the Resurrection and also to emphasize the importance of the oath.

القيامة (the Resurrection) signifying a great and calamitous occurrence, may refer to three events: (a) The death of a person is called القيامة الصغرى i.e. the small resurrection. It is to this resurrection that reference is made in the famous ḥadīth, viz. من مات فقد قامت i.e. he who dies, his resurrection has indeed taken place. (b) The moral death of a whole people or nation.

This is called القامة الوسطى i.e. the Middle Resurrection. (c) The Final Resurrection. The word قيامة (resurrection) has been used in the Quran in all these three senses.

4458. Commentary:

The Quran has mentioned three stages of development of the human soul. The first stage is called النفس الامارة i.e. the uncontrollable spirit or the spirit prone to evil, when the animal in man is predominant.

The second stage is that of النفس اللوامة i.e. the self-accusing spirit, when man begins to be conscious of evil, that is, when his awakened conscience upbraids him for doing bad deeds and restrains his passions and appetites. In moments of weakness of the flesh, in this stage, he may falter or fall, but will not perish, every failure bringing with it a fresh reproach and repentance. The human in man gets the upper hand in him. It is the beginning of his spiritual resurrection. النفس اللوامة has been cited here in evidence of the Final Resurrection. If man has no

4. Does man think that We shall not assemble his bones^a?⁴⁴⁵⁹

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ نَجْمَعَ
عِظَامَهُ ۝

5. Yea, We have the power to restore his very fingertips^b.⁴⁴⁶⁰

بَلَىٰ قَدِيرِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ نُسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُ ۝

6. But man desires to continue to send forth evil deeds in front of him.

بَلْ يَرِيدُ الْإِنْسَانُ لِيَفْجُرَ أَمَامَهُ ۝

7. He asks, ‘When will be the Day of Resurrection^c?’⁴⁴⁶¹

يَسْأَلُ أَيَّانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ ۝

^a23:83; 37:54; 56:48; 79:12. ^b17:100; 36:78-80. ^c78:2; 79:43.

responsibility, if he has not to account for his deeds in an afterlife, why this pricking of conscience at the doing of an evil deed?

The highest stage of development of the human soul, however, is that of النفس المطمئنة i.e. the spirit at rest. At this stage the human soul becomes practically immune to failure or faltering and is at peace with its Creator.

4459. Commentary:

The objection of disbelievers, viz. when they are dead and reduced to bones and dust how would they be given a new life, is repeatedly mentioned and effectively answered in the Quran. See 17:50-52 and 36:78-80.

4460. Important Words:

بنان (fingertips) is the plural of بانه which is derived from بن which means, he remained or stayed in a place. بنان means, fingers; ends or extremities thereof; fingertips; toes; all the limbs or members of the body; any part or all the limbs; arms or hands or legs or feet (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

At another place in the Quran (36:78-80), the objection of disbelievers about life after death has been answered by stating that the Almighty Creator Who has created man from a mere sperm drop has the power to restore him to life after he is dead, but in the present verse the restoration of his fingertips has been adduced as an argument to refute the same objection. In fact, the word بنان represents man's power and strength, as by means of his hand he grasps an object and defends himself. In fact man's hands, i.e. his fingers, are the most important members of his body. The word بنان as given under Important Words may stand for the whole human body. Thus the verse signifies that God has the power to restore all the powers of man, or even of a whole people when, to all intents and purposes, they are dead and defunct.

4461. Commentary:

The question seems to have been

8. When the eye is dazzled,⁴⁴⁶²

فَإِذَا بَرِقَ الْبَصَرُ^٨

9. And the moon is eclipsed,⁴⁴⁶³

وَحَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ^٩

10. And the sun and the moon are brought together,⁴⁴⁶⁴

وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ^{١٠}

11. On that day man will say, 'Whither to flee^a'?

يَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيْنَ الْمَفْرُجُ^{١١}

^a80:35.

asked in derision or doubt. In fact, doubt about the Hereafter gives rise to a mocking attitude on the disbelievers' part.

4462. Important Words:

برق (is dazzled) means, he feared so that he was astonished or amazed or stupefied at seeing the gleam of lightning; he was frightened, or he became perplexed or unable to see his right course. برق بصره means, his eye became dazzled or it became weak. برقت قدماء means, his feet became weak (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The metaphor "when the eye is dazzled," signifies, "when the opponents of truth are completely confused and baffled".

4463. Commentary:

"Moon" being a symbol of the political power of the Arabs, the verse may mean: when the power of the Arabs will break and their glory will depart. Or the darkening of the moon may mean the darkening of both the sun and the moon, as the moon borrows its light from the sun, so that when the moon is darkened it means that the sun also has become dark.

4464. Commentary:

The expression, "the sun and the moon are brought together" may signify that the whole solar system will be completely disrupted. Or the words may signify the destruction of the political power of the Arabs and of the Iranian dynasty, the moon being the symbol of the political power of the former and the sun that of the latter. Or the reference may be to the lunar and solar eclipses—a highly unusual phenomenon, which, according to a ḥadīth was to occur in the time of the Promised Mahdī. The ḥadīth is to the following effect: ان لهدينا آيتين لم تكونا منذ خلق السموات و الارض الخ i.e. For our Mahdī there are two signs which have never been witnessed since the time when the heavens and the earth were created, viz. that the moon will be eclipsed on the first night and the sun on the second day in the month of Ramadan (Baihaqī). This meant that the day of the final triumph of Islam and that of the defeat and destruction of the forces of evil will dawn with the Mahdī's appearance in the world. Strangely enough, both the sun and the moon were eclipsed in the month of Ramadan in 1894 after

12. Nay! There is no refuge!⁴⁴⁶⁵

كَلَّا لَا وَزَرَ^{١٧}

13. With thy Lord *alone* will be the place of rest that day.

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُسْتَقَرُّ^{١٨}

14. That day will man be informed of that which he has sent forward and has left behind.⁴⁴⁶⁶

يُبَشِّرُ الْإِنْسَانَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ^{١٩}

15. Nay, man is a witness against himself;

بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ^{٢٠}

16. Even though he puts forward his excuses.

وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ مَعَاذِيرَهُ^{٢١}

17. Move not thy tongue with this *revelation* that thou mayest hasten to preserve it.⁴⁴⁶⁷

لَا تَحْرِكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ^{٢٢}

18. "Surely, upon Us rests its collection and its recital."⁴⁴⁶⁸

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ^{٢٣}

^a15:10.

Aḥmad, the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement had made the claim that he was the Promised Messiah and Maḥdī.

4465. Important Words:

أَوْزَر (refuge) is derived from أَوْزَر. They say أَوْزَر الشَّيْءَ i.e. he protected, guarded the thing; concealed it or took it away. أَوْزَر الرجل means, he gave asylum to the man. وَزَر (wazarun) means, place of refuge; a high mountain; a mountain where one takes refuge (Lane & Aqrab).

4466. Commentary:

The words "that which he has sent forward and has left behind," may mean, the evil deeds which man did but which he should not have done and the good deeds which he should

have done but he failed to do, i.e. his sins of omission and commission.

4467-4468. Commentary:

Bukhārī reports that in the beginning when a certain portion of the Quran was revealed to the Holy Prophet, in his anxiety lest he should forget it, he would start hurriedly repeating it. It is this practice that the Prophet was enjoined in this verse to give up, because, as stated in the following three verses, God had taken upon Himself not only to safeguard the text of the Quran from being tampered with but also to see that it was collected in the form of an immaculately arranged Book (see General Introduction) and that its Message was conveyed and explained

19. So when We recite it, then follow thou its recital.

فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَاهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ ﴿١٩﴾

20. Then upon Us *rests* the expounding thereof.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. Nay, but you love the present life^a; **4469**

كَأَلَّا بَلَ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ ﴿٢١﴾

22. And you neglect the Hereafter.

وَتَذَرُونَ الْآخِرَةَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. Some faces on that day will be bright,^b

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاصِرَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. Looking *eagerly* towards their Lord; **4470**

إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

^a87:17. ^b88:9.

to the whole world (15:10). Or the meaning may be that, because the preceding verses referred to a day of reckoning for disbelievers, the Holy Prophet was naturally anxious that the revelation bearing upon the promised punishment should come soon. He is here told that he need have no anxiety on that score, as it was God's own responsibility, when a revelation should descend and what form the punishment should take, and that the Quran should be collected, read and explained to the world. It may be convenient to set out here three quotations: "There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text (of the Quran) which Muḥammad himself gave forth and used" (Muir). "Efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Quran have failed" (Enc. Brit.). "The Quran is perhaps the most read book in the world. Certainly it is the most often memorized, and possibly it

exerts the greatest influence on those who read it" (The Religions of Man).

Besides the meaning given in the text, the verse has also been interpreted as follows: "It is Our responsibility that We should explain the Quranic revelation through your tongue" (Rūḥul-Ma'ānī). This speaks volumes for the inviolability of the Holy Prophet's *Sunnah* and its indispensability as a safe and sure guide, next only to the Quran itself. For a detailed exposition, however, of this and the preceding verse see General Introduction and 15:10.

4469. Commentary

The particle *ثُمَّ* besides meaning, "your assertion that Resurrection will not take place is false," has been taken to mean, "it is as certain as anything that the Resurrection shall take place (Kabīr)."

4470. Commentary:

The verse means that the righteous

25. ^aAnd some faces on that day will be dismal,^{4470A}

وَوُجُوهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِآسَرَةٍ ۝١٥

26. Thinking that a back-breaking calamity is *about* to befall them.⁴⁴⁷¹

تَظُنُّ أَنْ يُفْعَلَ بِهَا فَاقِرَةٌ ۝١٦

27. Hearken! when *the soul of the dying man* comes up to the throat^b,⁴⁴⁷²

كَلَّا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ التَّرَاقِيَ ۝١٧

28. And it is said, 'Who is the wizard to save him?'⁴⁴⁷³

وَقِيلَ مَنْ رَاقٍ ۝١٨

^a68:44; 80:41; 88:3-4. ^b56:84.

believers will look to their Lord, expecting to be rewarded for the good deeds they had done in this world. Or the meaning may be that they will be endowed with special spiritual eyes to see God; but it does not mean that God has a body and that He can be seen with our physical eyes. "Eyes cannot reach Him and He reaches the eyes and He is Incomprehensible" (6:104). The sight of God will be a special Divine manifestation, which will be unfolded to the human soul untrammelled by its earthly raiment.

4470A. Important Words:

بأسرة (dismal) is derived from بَسَرَ which means, he frowned; contracted his face; he grinned; he was gloomy or dismal. بَسَرَ وَجْهَهُ means, he frowned or he contracted his face excessively or he looked with intense dislike or hatred (Lane & Aqrab).

4471. Important Words:

فاقرة (back-breaking) is derived from فَقَرَ which means, he stigmatized a man. فَقَرَ الْبَعِيرَ means, he made an incision in the nose of the camel. فُقِرَتْهُ

الداهية, means, the calamity broke the vertebrae of his back. فاقرة means, an act that breaks the vertebrae of the back; a back-breaking calamity. They say عمل به الفاقرة i.e. he did to him that which broke his back (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The Fall of Mecca broke the back of the Quraishite power.

4472. Important Words:

ترقوة (throat) is the plural of الرقبة meaning, the collarbone. They say بلغته روقه التراقي i.e. he was about to die. راق means, the uppermost parts of the chest or parts of the throat next of the chest (Lane & Aqrab).

4473. Important Words:

راق (wizard) is derived from رَقِيَ. They say رَقِيَ الْجَبَلُ i.e. he ascended the mountain. رَقَّقَهُ (raqqa) means, he charmed him or fascinated him by uttering a spell. رَاقٍ means, one who charms; a charmer; one who ascends (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse may mean: (a) Who will

29. And he is sure that it is the
hour of parting;

وَوَظَنَّ أَنَّهُ الْفِرَاقُ ۝٢٩

30. And one shank rubs against
another shank *in death*
agony; ⁴⁴⁷⁴

وَالْتَقَّتِ السَّاقُ بِالسَّاقِ ۝٣٠

31. Unto thy Lord that day will
be the driving.

ع ٣١
١٧

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمَسَاقُ ۝٣١

R. 2.

32. For he neither accepted *the*
truth, nor offered Prayers^a; ⁴⁴⁷⁵

فَلَا صَدَّقَ وَلَا صَلَّى ۝٣٢

33. ^bBut he rejected *the truth*
and turned his back;

وَلَكِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى ۝٣٣

34. Then he went to his
kinsfolk, strutting along *in*
pride. ⁴⁴⁷⁶

ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ يَمْتَطِي ۝٣٤

^a74:44. ^b74:47.

ascend with the soul of the dying man, the angel of mercy who will take him to Paradise or the angel of punishment who will drag him to Hell? (b) Where is the wizard or charmer who will avert the approaching death or relieve the dying man of his agony?

4474. Commentary:

The word الساق literally meaning shank, metaphorically signifies a calamity or affliction (27:45 & 68:43). The verse signifies that one affliction will be joined to another for the departed soul; the agony of leaving his near and dear ones behind will be joined to the agony of death and the punishment awaiting the disbeliever in the next world.

4475. Commentary:

صدق (accepted the truth) stands for

right belief and صلى (offered Prayers) for good conduct, the two basic principles of the Islamic teaching. Prayer is the essence of عبادة which is total submission and conforming one's conduct to Divine laws. Thus the verse purports to say that both the mind and body of disbelievers rebelled against God.

4476. Important Words:

يمتطي (strutting) is from مط. They say مطى الشيء i.e. he stretched or lengthened the thing. مط خده means, he behaved proudly. يمتطي means, he strutted along (Aqrab).

Commentary:

False pride, arrogance and conceit are, as repeatedly stated in the Quran, at the root of all disbelief and rejection of the Divine Message and of opposition to God's Prophets and Messengers.

35. 'Woe unto thee! and woe again!

أَوَّلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوَّلَىٰ ۖ

36. Then woe unto thee! and woe again!' **4477**

ثُمَّ أَوَّلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوَّلَىٰ ۖ

37. Does man think that he is to be left *to himself* uncontrolled?**4478**

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى ۖ

38. "Was he not a drop of fluid, emitted forth?

أَلَمْ يَكْ نُظْفَةً مِّنْ مَّنِيٍّ يُمْنَىٰ ۖ

39. ^bThen he became a clot, then He shaped and perfected *him*.

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ۖ

40. ^cThen He made of him a pair, the male and female.

فَجَعَلَ مِنْهُ الزَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ ۖ

41. Has not such a One the power to raise the dead to life?^d

أَلَيْسَ ذَٰلِكَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ

^a18:38; 36:78; 80:20. ^b23:15; 40:68; 96:3. ^c92:4. ^d17:51-52; 36:80; 46:34.

4477. Commentary:

These two verses speak of a double punishment—mental agony and physical punishment, or punishment in this world and in the next.

4478. Important Words:

سدى (uncontrolled) is derived from سَدَو (sadwun) which is inf. noun signifies going at random, heedlessly or in a headlong manner, without aim or object, not following a guide to the right course. ذَهَبَ كَلَامَهُ سَدَى means, his discourse proved useless (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse reproachfully reminds the conceited and disdainful disbeliever of the grand object of his life and of his accountability before his Lord and Master in the Hereafter. Does man think that he has been

created without an aim or object and that death is the end of all things, and that he will not be called upon to explain his conduct before his Lord in the next life? The whole idea is inconsistent with God's Wisdom. It is inconceivable that God should have created man from an insignificant thing—from a sperm drop—and should have endowed him with such great natural powers and faculties as to make him the centre and pivot of all creation and then should have left him without control, to eat, drink and be merry. It is further clear from this verse that the Lord Who created him from such an insignificant beginning will give him a new life when he is dead and is reduced to crumbled bones and dust, to make spiritual progress which knows no end. This is the substance of the next four verses.

CHAPTER 76

AD-DAHR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introductory Remarks

This *Sūrah* like its predecessor belongs to the early Meccan period and takes its title from the word Ad-Dahr, occurring in its opening verse. It has also appropriately been called Al-Insān.

Towards the end of the previous *Sūrah*, it was stated that man's creation from an insignificant fluid and his development into a full-fledged human being, endowed with great natural powers, leads to the inescapable inference that his life has a divine purpose to serve and that the Great God Who created him from a sperm drop possesses the power to give him a new life after he is dead. The present *Sūrah* is an extension of the same theme, viz. that man has been gifted with wonderful natural capabilities to rise to great spiritual heights.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* in its opening verses reminds man of his insignificant beginning by the words, "Has there not come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing spoken of?" and proceeds to say that he has been endowed with reason and understanding, in order that, following the path shown to him by God's Prophets, he may make interminable spiritual progress and thus achieve the object for which he has been created. But when Divine teachers appear to guide men to God, some of them reject God's Message and incur His displeasure, while others, more fortunate, respond to the Divine Call, follow the Teacher of the age and earn great heavenly blessings. Then, the *Sūrah* gives a beautiful description of the Divine favours which are bestowed upon the righteous believers, in this world and in the Hereafter, referring briefly also to the kind of punishment which the disbelievers receive for their wilful rejection of God's Message. The *Sūrah* fittingly closes with the observation that God has revealed the Quran, the most perfect teaching to guide man to the path which leads to the Lord and Creator of all creation, but he can derive no benefit from the Divine teaching unless he conforms his will to the will of God.



(AD-DAHR)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Has there not come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing spoken of ^b, 4479

هَلْ أَتَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ
لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْئًا مَّدْكُورًا ②

3. "We have created man from a mingled sperm drop that We might try him; so We made him hearing, seeing. 4480

إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ
نَّبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b19:68. ^c18:38; 35:12; 36:78; 40:68; 80:20.

4479. Important Words:

حان (period) is derived from حان. They say حان الشيء i.e. the time of the thing came near, it happened. حين means, time or a space or period of time, any time; a continuous time; an appointed time; time absolutely; the time when an event takes place; time without end (Lane & Aqrab).

دهر (time) is infinitive noun from دهر. They say دهر القوم أمر مكروه i.e. an evil event befell the people. دهر means, time from the beginning of the world to the end; any long or unlimited period of time; a period of time whether long or short; time without end, differing from زمان which means, time having end. دهر also means, an age; fate or fortune; an evil event or accident; a misfortune; a calamity, a purpose; a desire; the end that one has in view; a custom or habit (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

الانسان (man) in this and the next

verse does not mean human species as such, but every man. The verse means that before man is born, he is not mentioned, spoken of, or referred to; the reference being to his insignificant and unmentionable beginning.

4480. Commentary:

أمشاج is the plural of مشيج which means, a mixture. Man is created from a sperm drop which itself is a mixture of several things, the implication being that he has been endowed with various natural powers, faculties and attributes meant for his moral and spiritual advance. This process of the creation of man points only to a general rule of creation; not that in no case could it be otherwise. The fact that man is gifted with insight and understanding signifies that he is a free agent, enjoying discretion and volition; therefore he is responsible for his actions. The belief in man's freedom of action and

4. We have shown him the way,^a whether he be grateful or ungrateful.⁴⁴⁸¹

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ①

5. ^bVerily, We have prepared for the disbelievers chains and iron-collars and a blazing Fire.⁴⁴⁸²

إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَلَاسِلًا وَأَغْلَالًا وَسَعِيرًا ②

6. But the virtuous drink of a cup, tempered with camphor—⁴⁴⁸³

إِنَّ الْآبَرَارَ يُشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ③

7. A spring wherefrom the servants of Allah drink, making it gush forth abundantly.⁴⁴⁸⁴

عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ④

^a90:11. ^b18:103; 29:69; 33:9; 48:14.

responsibility leads inevitably to the belief in the Hereafter.

4481. Commentary:

God has given man reason and understanding. He has made him responsible for his actions, and through His Messengers and Prophets has shown him the way that leads to God-realization. But it is for man to make right use of God-given faculties and opportunities (this being the meaning of شكر), and by submitting to Divine laws to achieve the object of his creation or by flouting them to bring about his spiritual death.

4482. Commentary:

For a detailed explanation of the nature and significance of the punishments of Hell, see 69:30-33. Briefly, the verse alludes to the fact that every deed which a man does is followed by a corresponding act of God. The entanglements of dis-

believers in worldly affairs will take the form of chains in the next world, cares of the world will take the form of iron-collars, and greed and carnal desires that of Hellfire.

4483. Important Words:

كافور (camphor) is derived from كفر i.e. to cover or to suppress. The meaning is that the quaffing of camphor-drink will have the effect of cooling down animal passions. The heart of righteous believers will be cleansed of every impure thought and they will be refrigerated with the coolness of deep divine knowledge.

4484. Commentary:

Righteous believers will drink of cups which will be filled from springs which they have dug with great labour, i.e. the deeds which they had done in the earthly life would appear in the next world in the form of springs. This is the first stage of

8. They fulfil *their* vow, and fear a day the evil of which is widespread. **4484A**

يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ
مُسْتَظِيرًا ۝٨

9. ^aAnd they feed, for love of Him, the poor, the orphan, and the prisoner, **4485**

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا
وَيَتِيمًا وَآسِيرًا ۝٩

10. *Saying*, 'We feed you for Allah's pleasure *only*. We desire no reward nor thanks from you. **4485A**

إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ
جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا ۝١٠

^a2:178; 90:15-17.

spiritual evolution which requires hard and continuous striving on the part of believers, because unless man brings under control, and suppresses, his evil propensities, he cannot make any spiritual progress. The "spring" mentioned in the verse is the spring of God's love and Divine realization.

4484A. Commentary:

Fulfilling "the vow" signifies the discharging of man's duties to God. Man's obligations to his fellow-beings are mentioned in the next verse.

4485. Important Words:

طعام (food) is inf. noun from طعم i.e. he tasted or ate. طعام means, food; wholesome and agreeable food which satisfies the eater. They say أكل ما يطعم i.e. the eater of this food does not become satisfied (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse may mean: (1) Because they love God, so, in order to win His pleasure, they feed the poor and the

captives. (2) They feed the poor for the sake of feeding them, i.e. they do the good act of feeding for the sake of doing good, seeking no reward, appreciation or approbation for what they do. (3) They feed the poor while they themselves need the money which they spend on others. The verse also signifies that the righteous believers give the poor wholesome and agreeable food, طعام meaning agreeable and wholesome food (Lane). This implies that the believers are expected to give in charity the things they love most. Elsewhere the Quran says: "You cannot attain to righteousness unless you spend in the way of Allah out of that which you love best (3:93).

4485A. Commentary:

In everything that a believer does his whole attention is directed towards winning the pleasure of God—his highest ambition. He wants no return, reward or appreciation. His reward is with his Lord and Master.

11. Verily, we fear from our Lord a frowning, distressful day.⁴⁴⁸⁶

إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبِّنَا يَوْمًا عَبُوسًا قَمْطَرِيرًا ۝١١

12. So Allah will save them from the evil of that day, and will grant them cheerfulness and happiness.

فَوَقَّاهُمُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّاهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَسُرُورًا ۝١٢

13. ^aAnd He will reward them, for their steadfastness, with a Garden and a raiment of silk,

وَجَزَاهُمْ بِمَا صَبَرُوا جَنَّةً وَحَرِيرًا ۝١٣

14. Reclining therein upon couches,^b they will experience there neither excessive heat nor excessive cold^c.⁴⁴⁸⁷

مُتَكِّينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ ۚ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيهَا شَمْسًا وَلَا زَمْهَرِيرًا ۝١٤

15. And its shades will be close over them, and its clustered fruits will be brought within easy reach.

وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلُّهَا وَذُلِّلَتْ قُطُوفُهَا تَذْلِيلًا ۝١٥

16. ^dAnd vessels of silver will be passed round among them, and *also* goblets of glass,

وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِآنِيَةٍ مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيرًا ۝١٦

^a22:24. ^b18:32; 36:57; 83:24. ^c20:120. ^d43:72.

4486. Important Words:

عَبُوسًا (frowning) is derived from عَبَسَ. They say عَبَسَ وَجْهَهُ i.e. he frowned; he grinned, frowning or looking sternly or austere. يَوْمٌ عَبُوسٌ means, a distressful or calamitous day, or a day that makes one distressful (Lane).

قَمْطَرِيرٌ (calamitous) is derived from اقْمَطَر which means, it was or became distressful or calamitous. يَوْمٌ قَمْطَرِيرٌ means, a distressful or calamitous day, or a day that makes one knit the brow or contract the skin between the

eyes. شر قَمْطَرِيرٍ means, an intense evil (Lane).

4487. Important Words:

زَمْهَرِيرًا (excessive cold) is derived from زَمِهَرَ. They say زَمِهَرَ الْعَيْنُ او اَزَمِهَرَ i.e. the eye became red on account of anger. اَزَمِهَرَ الْيَوْمُ means, the day became intensely cold. اَزَمِهَرَ وَجْهَهُ means, his face became contracted with a stern or morose look. زَمْهَرِيرٌ means, cold or intense cold (Lane & Aqrab).

17. *Bright as glass but made of silver, which they will measure according to their own measure.*⁴⁴⁸⁸

قَوَارِيرًا مِنْ فِضَّةٍ قَدَّرُوهَا تَقْدِيرًا ۝١٧

18. And therein will they be given to drink a cup tempered with ginger,⁴⁴⁸⁹

وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا ۝١٨

4488. Commentary:

The vessel from which the righteous will drink will be as white as silver and as bright and crystal clear as glass, and they will receive the paradisiacal drink in quantity according to the measure of the good deeds they had done in this life.

4489. Commentary:

زَنْجَبِيل (ginger) is a compound of زَنَى (meaning to ascend) and جَبَل (meaning mountain). The compound word زَنْجَبِيل therefore means, "he ascended the mountain." زَنْجَبِيل or ginger is the root of a plant, very useful in promoting the natural heat of the body. The name given to it points to this property, for it gives strength to and generates heat in the weak body so as to enable a person to ascend precipitous heights. These two verses in which كَانُور (camphor) and زَنْجَبِيل (ginger) are respectively spoken of call attention to the two stages through which a believer has to pass in order to make advance, from the low position of slavery to passion, to the heights of virtue and righteousness. The first stage is that in which poisonous materials are suppressed and the flood of passions

begins to subside. This we term the كَانُور (camphor) stage; for in this stage what is effected is only the suppression of poisonous matter, just as كَانُور has the property of nullifying the strong effect of passion. But the spiritual power which is required to overcome all difficulties is acquired in the second stage which is called the زَنْجَبِيل stage. The spiritual ginger (زَنْجَبِيل) which has the effect of a tonic on the spiritual system is the manifestation of Divine Beauty and Glory which affords nourishment to the soul. Braced with this manifestation, the spiritual wayfarer is able to traverse the dreary deserts and to climb the steep heights to be met with on his spiritual journey. To make men understand these two spiritual stages two words have been employed by the Quran, viz. كَانُور or that which suppresses poisonous matters and زَنْجَبِيل or that which gives strength to ascend spiritual heights and overcome all difficulties in the spiritual journey. Whereas at the كَانُور (camphor) stage the righteous will themselves drink the wine of God's love, at the much higher زَنْجَبِيل (ginger) stage they will be served with this elixir.

19. There will be a spring herein named Salsabīl. ⁴⁴⁹⁰

20. ^aAnd there will wait upon them youths who will not age. When thou seest them thou thinkest them to be pearls scattered about.

21. And when thou seest thou wilt see there a bliss and a great kingdom. ⁴⁴⁹¹

22. On them will be garments of fine green silk and thick brocade. ^b And they will be made to wear bracelets of silver. ^c And their Lord will give them to drink a pure beverage. ⁴⁴⁹²

23. ^d“This is your reward, and your labour is appreciated.” ⁴⁴⁹³

عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلًا ۝١٩

وَيُطَوَّفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَدَانِ مُخَلَّدُونَ ۚ

إِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَنثورًا ۝٢٠

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ثَمَّ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا

وَمُلْكًا كَبِيرًا ۝٢١

عَلَيْهِمْ ثِيَابٌ سُنْدُسٍ خُضْرٌ

وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ ۚ وَحُلُّوْا أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ

فِضَّةٍ ۚ وَسَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا ۝٢٢

إِنَّ هَذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَاءً وَكَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ

ع ٢٣
١٩

مَشْكُورًا ۝٢٣

^a52:25; 56:18. ^b18:32; 44:54. ^c18:32; 22:24; 35:34. ^d32:18; 43:73.

4490. Commentary:

The word سلسبيل literally meaning "enquire about the way," the verse purports to say that at the زنجبيل (ginger) stage the spiritual wayfarer becomes so much intoxicated with Divine love that, in his overbearing anxiety to meet God, he enquires everywhere and of everyone about the nearest and speediest approach to the Divine threshold.

4491. Commentary:

In addition to the spiritual kingdom that the righteous believers have been promised for the Hereafter, they were given mastery of the great empires of

the time in this very life.

4492. Commentary:

At the كانوا stage of spiritual journey the God-intoxicated wayfarer is described as himself seeking to drink the wine of God's love (v. 6) and at the زنجبيل stage, he is served by others with the life-giving beverage (v. 18), but at the last or سلسبيل stage God Himself gives him to drink the elixir of everlasting life.

4493. Commentary:

For a full discussion of the nature, form and scope of the paradisiacal blessings, see chapters 52, 55 & 56. This verse and those preceding it may

R. 2.

24. Surely, We have revealed unto thee the Quran piecemeal.⁴⁴⁹⁴

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ تَنْزِيلًا ۝٢٤

25. So wait patiently for the judgement of thy Lord, and yield not to any sinful or ungrateful one among them.

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ آثِمًا أَوْ كَفُورًا ۝٢٥

26. ^aAnd remember the name of thy Lord morning and evening.

وَاذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ۝٢٦

27. ^bAnd during the night prostrate thyself before Him, and extol His glory for a long part of the night.

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا ۝٢٧

28. ^cVerily, these people love the present life, and they neglect a heavy day before them.⁴⁴⁹⁵

إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ يُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ وَيَذَرُونَ وَرَاءَهُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيلًا ۝٢٨

^a3:42; 48:10. ^b17:80; 50:41; 52:50; 73:3-5. ^c17:19.

also apply to the great Divine favours that were bestowed upon the followers of the Holy Prophet in this very life.

4494. Commentary:

The Quran was revealed gradually and piecemeal. Its revelation spread over a period of 23 years. This gradual process served two great purposes. It helped believers to learn, remember and assimilate it and to mould their lives in accordance with its teaching. The gradual process was also intended to meet the increasing needs of changing circumstances and to strengthen the belief and conviction of Muslims, since, during the interval, they had opportunities to witness fulfilment of prophecies made earlier in the Quran. The

piecemeal revelation of the Quran also fulfilled the following Biblical prophecy, viz. "For it is precept upon precept; line upon line, here a little and there a little: for with strange lips and another tongue will he speak to this people" (Isaiah 28:11). The construction of the verse and the words used in the Biblical prophecy are expressive of Divine purpose in the gradual revelation of the Quran.

4495. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the hopes and fears of disbelievers are confined to this world. They have no thought for the Hereafter. They want to see promises of prosperity and progress made to Muslims and of those of punishment to themselves fulfilled here and now. But God is not

29. We have created them and strengthened their make; and when We will, We can replace them by others like them^a. **4496**

نَحْنُ بَخَلَقْنَاهُمْ وَشَدَدْنَا أَسْرَهُمْ^ج
وَإِذَا شِئْنَا بَدَّلْنَا أَمْثَالَهُمْ تَبْدِيلًا^{٢٩}

30. ^bVerily, this is a Reminder. So whoever wishes, may take a way unto his Lord.

إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ^ج فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ
إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا^{٣٠}

31. ^cBut you will not unless Allah so wills. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, Wise. **4497**

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ^ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا^{٣١}

32. He causes whom He pleases to enter His mercy^d, and for the wrong doers He has prepared a painful punishment. **4498**

يُدْخِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ^ط وَالظَّالِمِينَ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا^{٣٢}

^a56:62. ^b20:4; 73:20; 74:55; 80:12. ^c18:25; 74:57; 81:30. ^d48:26.

in a hurry to punish. The Holy Prophet is enjoined to pay no heed to their demand for punishment but to prepare himself and his followers morally and spiritually by Night Prayer and glorification of God.

"Heavy day" may mean the Resurrection Day or the Day when disbelievers are punished in this life.

4496. Commentary:

This verse, in conjunction with the verses preceding it, means that Truth will spread gradually, either that there will come about a great moral revolution in the lives of the people or if they refused to benefit by the Quranic teaching they will be replaced by another people who will carry out the Divine will and plan. God is not in a hurry to punish them because He "has created man in the best make" (95:5) that he may

develop and manifest in himself Divine attributes and not that he may incur His displeasure and be punished.

4497. Commentary:

Besides the meaning given in the text, the verse may also mean: (1) It is God's Will that you should exercise your will "to take a way unto your Lord," and so be admitted into His mercy. (2) You cannot "take the way unto your Lord" unless you subordinate and conform your will to the will of God. (3) You should have subordinated your will to the will of God, but you seem not to have done so.

4498. Commentary:

The verse may also mean that God admits into His mercy him who himself wishes to be admitted into God's mercy by obeying Divine commandments; من being the subject of the verb يَشَاءُ.

CHAPTER 77

AL-MURSALĀT

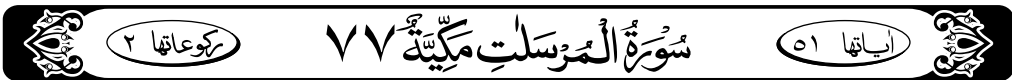
(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introductory Remarks

Nöldeke and Muir assign the revelation of this *Sūrah*, probably correctly, to the 4th year of the Call. Ibn Mas‘ūd, one of the earliest Companions of the Holy Prophet, however, is reported to have said that one day when they were sitting with the Holy Prophet in a cave near Minā, this *Sūrah* was revealed. At that time a snake appeared but before they could kill it, the reptile disappeared. Upon this the Holy Prophet said that they had remained safe from the snake as the snake had been safe from them (Qadīr). The *Sūrah* receives its title from the first word of the opening verse.

Subject Matter

Like other early Meccan chapters, this *Sūrah* also deals with the subject of the Resurrection, and as an argument in support of it, adduces the great spiritual revolution that is brought about by Divine Messengers among their peoples, especially the marvellous moral change that the Holy Prophet wrought in the lives of the degenerate and decadent Arabs. The advent of Divine Prophets has been compared in the *Sūrah* to the Day of Decision when bad men are separated from good men or, to use a beautiful metaphor, when grain becomes sifted from chaff. On that Day of Judgement the guilty are punished and the righteous receive the rewards of their good deeds. The *Sūrah* gives very apt and adequate description of the punishment—fittingly corresponding to their evil deeds—that will be meted out in the Hereafter, to the defiers and violators of Divine laws and goes on to describe the blessings and boons of Paradise which will be bestowed upon those who regulate their lives and conduct in accordance with them. In support of the doctrine of the Resurrection, the *Sūrah* also alludes, quite convincingly, to the development of the sperm drop into a properly shaped human being, equipped with great natural powers—in itself a wonder of creation. Towards the end, the *Sūrah* brings home to disbelievers the untenability of their rejection of the Quranic revelation which has so effectively proved, by drawing attention to man’s own creation and to the forces that work in the physical and spiritual worlds, that there is and there must be a life after death in which man shall have to explain his conduct.



(AL-MURSALĀT)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By those who are sent forth with goodness,⁴⁴⁹⁹

وَالْمُرْسَلَاتِ عُرْفًا ①

3. Then they push on with a *forceful* pushing,⁴⁵⁰⁰

فَالْعَصْفِ عَصْفًا ②

^aSee 1:1.

4499. Important Words:

واو (by). For the philosophy and significance of Quranic oaths see 37:2 & 91:2.

عرف (goodness) is derived from عرف (‘arafa) which means, he knew it or he knew it by means of any of the five senses, also by mental perception. عرف (‘urfun) means, acknowledgment or confession; goodness or a good action or quality; gentleness; beneficence, a benefit or bounty; common parlance or usage. They say جاء القوم عرفا عرفا i.e. the people came one after another (Lane).

Commentary:

The things, agencies or beings mentioned in this and the following four verses have been taken by various authorities to refer to winds; angels; God's Messengers and their followers; and particularly and very appropriately, to the Companions of the Holy Prophet. As referring to the Companions of the Holy Prophet the verse would mean that in the beginning of Islam the Companions

of the Prophet spread the Message of truth slowly and gently; as referring to Divine Messengers it means that they appear one after the other with the Message of truth which they spread with love.

4500. Important Words:

عصف (forceful pushing). عصف means, he was quick or swift. عصف الريح means, the wind blew violently or vehemently. عصف الزرع means, he cut the corn from its stalks or before its maturity. عصف means, straw or broken straw (Lane).

Commentary:

In view of the different meanings of عصف the verse may be taken to mean that after the initial difficulties in the preaching had been overcome, the Companions of the Holy Prophet were able to proceed much faster and carry on the Quranic Message with great vigour; or that, with the help of the Quranic teaching, they scattered before them falsehood and the forces of evil as broken straw is carried before the wind.

4. And by *those* who spread *the truth*, a good spreading,⁴⁵⁰¹

وَالشِّرِيتِ نَشْرًا ۝٤

5. *And* then they distinguish *fully between good and evil*.⁴⁵⁰²

فَانْفَرَقَتْ فَرَقًا ۝٥

6. Then they carry the exhortation *far and wide*⁴⁵⁰³

فَالْمَلِكِيَّتِ ذِكْرًا ۝٦

7. To excuse *some* and warn *others*.

عُذْرًا أَوْ نُذْرًا ۝٧

8. "Verily, that which you are promised must come to pass."⁴⁵⁰⁴

إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَوَاقِعٌ ۝٨

9. So when the stars are made to lose *their light*^b,⁴⁵⁰⁵

فَإِذَا النُّجُومُ طُمِسَتْ ۝٩

10. And when the heaven is rent asunder,⁴⁵⁰⁶

وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ فُرِجَتْ ۝١٠

^a51:6; 52:8. ^b82:3.

4501. Commentary:

The verse means that they proclaimed and spread the Message of truth far and wide, or scattered the seeds of goodness everywhere.

4502. Commentary:

With the dissemination of the Quranic Message, truth became distinct from falsehood and good men from bad men.

4503. Commentary:

Divine Messengers, or the Companions of the Holy Prophet, spread the Divine Message in order to warn people and also to establish the fact that they had conveyed the Message and thus had discharged the duty entrusted to them.

4504. Commentary:

The promised event is either the final triumph of truth over falsehood,

or the Resurrection.

4505. Important Words:

طُمِسَتْ (are made to lose their light). طُمِسَ means, it became effaced or obliterated. طُمِسَ النجم means, the star lost or became deprived of its light طُمِسَ الغيم النجوم means, the clouds concealed or covered the stars. (Lane & Aqrab). See also 10:89.

Commentary:

The verse means: When the religious divines become corrupt and cease to provide guidance to the masses, or when diverse calamities are about to befall people. The Arabs regarded the disappearance of stars as a sign of impending calamities.

4506. Commentary:

The verse means, when a new revelation begins to be sent down, or when great calamities and miseries befall the world.

11. And when the mountains are blown away^a,⁴⁵⁰⁷

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ نُسِفَتْ^{١١}

12. And when the Messengers are made to appear at the appointed time—⁴⁵⁰⁸

وَإِذَا الرُّسُلُ أَقْتُتْ^{١٢}

13. To what day have *these portents* been deferred?⁴⁵⁰⁹

لَا يَوْمٍ أَجَلَتْ^{١٣}

14. To the Day of Decision.

لِيَوْمِ الْفَصْلِ^{١٤}

15. And what should make thee know what the Day of Decision is!⁴⁵¹⁰

وَمَا أَذْرَبَكَ مَا يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ^{١٥}

16. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!⁴⁵¹¹

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ^{١٦}

17. ^bDid We not destroy the earlier peoples?

أَلَمْ نُهْلِكِ الْأَوَّلِينَ^{١٧}

^a78:21; 81:4. ^b6:134.

4507. Commentary:

The purport of the verse is: When great changes take place, or when powerful and influential men are brought low; or when old and time-honoured institutions are destroyed, root and branch. In short, when the whole corrupt order changes. For جبال see 14:47.

4508. Commentary:

The meaning is: When prophecies concerning the second advent of various Messengers will be fulfilled with the appearance in the world of a great heavenly Reformer who will come in the power and spirit of such Messengers, clad, as it were, in the mantles of all of them.

4509. Important Words:

أجل (deferred) is derived from أجل

(*ajila*) which means, it was or became delayed, postponed, kept back or it had a term or period appointed for it at which it should fall due or come to pass. أجل الشيء (*ajjala*) means, he delayed or postponed or deferred the thing or he appointed a period or term for it. (Lane & Aqrab).

4510. Commentary:

The Day of Decision may mean the day of the triumph of Islam over all other Faiths in the time of the Promised Messiah. Or it may mean the Resurrection Day.

4511. Commentary:

The reference in the verse may be to the disbelievers in the Holy Prophet's time or in that of the Promised Messiah.

18. We will now cause the later ones to follow them.

19. Thus do We deal with the guilty.⁴⁵¹²

20. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

21. Did We not create you from an insignificant fluid,^a

22. And We placed it in a safe resting place,

23. For a known measure of time?

24. ^bThus did We determine and what excellent Determiner We are!⁴⁵¹³

25. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

26. ^cHave We not made the earth so as to hold ⁴⁵¹⁴

ثُمَّ نُنْشِئُهُمُ الْآخِرِينَ ۝١٨

كَذَلِكَ نَفْعَلُ بِالْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝١٩

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝٢٠

أَلَمْ نَخْلُقْكُمْ مِنْ مَّاءٍ مَّهِينٍ ۝٢١

فَجَعَلْنَاهُ فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ۝٢٢

إِلَىٰ قَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ۝٢٣

فَقَدَرْنَا ۖ فَنِعْمَ الْقَادِرُونَ ۝٢٤

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝٢٥

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ كِفَاتًا ۝٢٦

^a23:14; 32:9; 36:78. ^b23:15. ^c7:26.

4512. Commentary:

The guilty never go unpunished, and the punishment, in the time of a Divine Messenger, takes place on a larger scale, involving whole communities and nations.

4513. Commentary:

This and the preceding three verses refer to the extremely subtle process of development of the sperm drop in the womb into a full-fledged human being, which indeed is a great wonder of creation. This process of creation is advanced as an argument in support of the Resurrection. The Quran has

repeatedly used this argument, for there exists a beautiful parallelism between the two, the mother's womb being likened in the Quran to man's life on earth and his birth to the Resurrection.

4514. Important Words:

كَفَاتًا (so as to hold) is derived from كَفَتَ which means, he or it hastened or was quick or swift. They say كَفَتَ الشَّيْءُ إِلَيْهِ i.e. he drew the thing together to himself and contracted, grasped or took it. كَفَاتَ is a place in which a thing is drawn together or comprehended and collected or congregated. The words أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ كِفَاتًا أَحْيَاءَ وَ أَمْوَاتًا mean: "Have

27. The living and the dead?

أَحْيَاءَ وَآمَوَاتًا ۝٢٧

28. "And We placed therein high mountains, and gave you sweet water to drink."⁴⁵¹⁵

وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ شِمَخٍ
وَأَسْقَيْنُكُمْ مَّاءً فُرَاتًا ۝٢٨

29. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝٢٩

30. 'Now move on towards that which you treated as a lie,

إِنظِرُّوْا إِلَى مَا كُنتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ ۝٣٠

31. *Aye*, move on towards a three-pronged shadow,⁴⁵¹⁶

إِنظِرُّوْا إِلَى ظِلٍّ ذِي ثَلَاثِ شُعَبٍ ۝٣١

^a13:4; 15:20; 21:32; 31:11.

We not made the earth a place which comprehends the living and the dead, or which draws to itself the living and the dead, or which is quick in its motion" (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

All mortals live on earth, and when they are dead their remains in one form or other abide in the earth. The verse may also refer to the law of gravitation or to the earth's motion on its axis or round the sun. The word *كفَات* may also signify that all the physical needs of man have been met in the earth.

4515. Important Words:

شامخ (high) is derived from *شامخ* which means, it was high or lofty. *شامخ أنفه* means, he raised his nose from pride, i.e. he exalted himself, he was proud or behaved proudly. *جبل شامخ* means, a high or lofty mountain. *شامخ نسب* means, a proud or high lineage. (Lane & Aqrab).

رواسية (mountains) is the plural of *رواسية*

and *جبال رواسية* means, firm mountains (Lane).

Commentary:

The firm and high mountains not only serve as a safeguard against earthquakes but also as natural reservoirs of water on which all life depends for its sustenance.

4516. Commentary:

ظل (shadow), as given under Important Words, serves three main purposes: it is cool; gives protection and is a means of comfort. As is mentioned in the following two verses disbelievers will be denied all these three things. The verse may also have reference to the wrong beliefs; evil deeds; usages, and practices of disbelievers which would take the form of three-pronged shadow in the next world. Or, according to some authorities, Ibn 'Abbās being prominent among them, the reference in the verse may be to the Christian

32. Neither affording shade, nor protecting from the flame.’⁴⁵¹⁷

33. It throws up sparks like huge castles,⁴⁵¹⁸

34. As if they were yellow camels.⁴⁵¹⁹

35. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

36. This is a day when they shall not *be able to speak*^a.⁴⁵²⁰

37. ^bNor shall they be permitted to offer excuses.⁴⁵²¹

38. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

39. ^c‘This is the Day of Decision; We have gathered you and all the earlier peoples together.

40. ‘If now you have any stratagem, use it against Me.’⁴⁵²²

لَا ظِلِيلٌ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنَ اللَّهِبِ ۖ

إِنَّهَا تَرْمِي بِشَرَرٍ كَالْقَصْرِ ۚ

كَأَنَّهُ جُمِلَتِ صُفْرٌ ۚ

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝

هَذَا يَوْمٌ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ ۚ

وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ ۝

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝

هَذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ ۚ جَمَعْنَاهُمْ

وَالْأَوَّلِينَ ۝

فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ كَيْدٌ فَكِيدُونِ ۝

^a36:66; 78:39. ^b9:66; 66:8. ^c37:22.

doctrine of the Trinity. Or the verse may mean that disbelievers will be punished from the right, the left and from above.

4517. Commentary:

See 56:43-44.

4518. Commentary:

As disbelievers sought ease and comfort and took pride in castles and stately buildings, their sins and transgressions will take the form of flames of fire rising high like huge castles.

4519. Commentary:

The Arabs took pride in their

camels of yellow colour which formed the greatest source of their wealth.

4520. Commentary:

See 36:66.

4521. Commentary:

The guilt of disbelievers having been fully established, they will not be allowed to offer any excuse or explanation.

4522. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet’s enemies have been challenged to do their worst against him.

41. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*! وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ٤١

R. 2.

42. "The righteous will be in *the midst of shades and springs*, إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلِّ وَعُيُونٍ ٤٢

43. ^bAnd fruits, such as they will desire. وَفَوَاحِشَهُمْ ٤٣

44. 'Eat and drink pleasantly as a reward for what you did.' كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ٤٤

45. Thus surely do We reward those who do good. إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ٤٥

46. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*! وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ٤٦

47. ^c'Eat and enjoy yourselves a little while *in this world*, *O rejecters of truth*; surely you are the guilty ones.' كُلُوا وَتَمَتَّعُوا قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُمْ مُّجْرِمُونَ ٤٧

48. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*! وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ٤٨

49. And when it is said unto them, 'Bow down,' they do not bow down. ⁴⁵²³ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ارْكَعُوا لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ٤٩

50. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*! وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ٥٠

^a56:31. ^b52:23; 55:53; 56:33. ^c14:31; 47:13.

4523. Important Words:

ركع (do not bow down). لا يركعون means, he bowed down. The word is sometimes used to denote humility and self-abasement. ركَعَ إِلَى اللَّهِ means, he humbled himself to God; he completely turned towards God and worshipped Him alone. The famous

pre-Islamic poet Nābighah says:

سِيلُغٌ عَذْرَاءٌ أَوْ نَجَا مِنْ أَمْرٍ

إِلَى رَبِّهِ رَبِّ الْبَرِيَّةِ رَاكِعٌ

i.e. he who worships God alone, the Creator of the world, will have a good plea and will get salvation.

51. In what discourse then, after this, will they believe?⁴⁵²⁴

ع
٢٣

فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

4524. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that as these ill-fated people have refused to

accept such an infallible Book as the Quran, they will never listen to truth or find the right path.

CHAPTER 78

AN-NABA'

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

This *Sūrah* is entitled An-Naba' (news of tremendous import or great event), because it deals with a subject of exceptional importance, i.e. certainty of the Resurrection, predominance of the Quran over all other revealed Scriptures, and of Islam over other faiths. The Day of Decision, i.e. the day when this Quranic claim will become an established fact, is mentioned twice in the preceding *Sūrah* and is repeated in the present *Sūrah*. The *Sūrah*, according to Muslim scholarly opinion, was revealed very early in the Holy Prophet's ministry at Mecca. Nöldeke agrees with this opinion.

The *Sūrah* opens with an enumeration of great Divine gifts upon man, and directs his attention to the implied suggestion that man has been placed upon this earth to serve a certain object and that his life here is the seedbed of an eternal future and will be followed by a Day of Reckoning. The *Sūrah* then gives a brief but awe-inspiring picture of that Day, and a graphic description of the heavenly blessings that await the righteous and of the punishment which will be meted out to the rejecters of truth, in this and in the next life.



(AN-NABA')

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. About what do they question one another? ②

عَمَّ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ②

3. ^bIt is about the great Event, ⁴⁵²⁵

عَنِ النَّبَاِ الْعَظِيمِ ③

4. ^cConcerning which they differ. ⁴⁵²⁶

الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ ④

5. Nay, soon they will come to know. ^d

كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ⑤

6. Nay, *We say it* again, they will soon come to know. ⁴⁵²⁷

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ⑥

^aSee 1:1. ^b38:68. ^c38:69-70. ^d102:4-5.

4525. Important Words:

النَّبَأُ (the great Event) among other things means, an announcement of great utility which results either in great knowledge or predominance of opinion and which inspires awe and makes the heart tremble with fear (Lane, Kulliyyāt & Rāghib).

Commentary:

The addition of the qualifying word العظيم (great) to النبأ which itself means, a great news or event, bespeaks of the tremendous import of the event referred to here. The words النبأ العظيم are taken to signify either the Day of Reckoning or the predominance of the Quran over all revealed Scriptures and that of Islam over other Faiths and religious systems. The disbelievers (the verse purports to say) persuade themselves to believe that the predicted event will never

take place. So they ask half-mockingly and half in doubt, when that event, so loudly proclaimed, will happen.

4526. Commentary:

The disbelievers do not believe that there will ever be a Day of Reckoning, or that Islam will ever predominate over other religions. Or the verse may mean that they hold divergent views about these things. Some of them call the Quran a jumble of ancient stories, others dub it as magic, yet others say that it is a forgery or at best the creation of the Holy Prophet's own heated imagination. About the Holy Prophet also their views differ. Some call him a mad man, others a magician, and yet others a poet.

4527. Commentary:

The verse means that disbelievers

7. ^aHave We not made the earth
as a bed,

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهْدًا ۝٧

8. And the mountains as pegs?

وَالْجِبَالِ أَوْتَادًا ۝٨

9. ^bAnd We have created you in
pairs, ⁴⁵²⁸

وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ۝٩

10. And We have made your
sleep for rest, ⁴⁵²⁹

وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا ۝١٠

11. ^cAnd We have made the
night as a covering, ^{4529A}

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا ۝١١

^a2:23; 20:54; 27:62; 51:49. ^b36:37; 51:50; 75:40; 92:4. ^c6:97; 25:48; 28:74.

are indulging in wild conjectures about the Resurrection, the Quran, and about the Holy Prophet's future. But time will show that they suffered from illusions, and that the Holy Prophet was bound to succeed in his mission and, as a corollary, that what the Quran has said about the Day of Reckoning is also sure to happen.

4528. Commentary:

In these verses (vv. 7-9) we are told that God has created the earth and in it all physical needs of man have been provided, and that He has created the mountains which constitute a storehouse of mineral wealth and serve as great reservoirs of water, and that God has created for man his mate in order that his progeny may continue. This shows that man's life for whose sake all this machinery has been made is not without a definite purpose and that death is not the end of man; it is followed by a better and fuller life where human soul will make everlasting progress.

4529. Important Words:

سبات (rest) is derived from سبت which

means, he rested; he abstained from work. سبات signifies rest and hence sleep, or light or heavy sleep. It also means, a period; a long period, being syn. with دهر (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Nations and communities, after undergoing heavy sacrifices are disposed to take rest. Consequently there comes upon them a period of forgetfulness. This period is sometimes very long. Then a Divine Reformer appears and they are required again to make sacrifices for the cause of truth. Thus the circle continues. In fact, سبات (rest) is a great Divine gift. After a day's hard work, sleep gives rest to man's jaded nerves and tired limbs, and thus he is refreshed and replenished for the next day's work.

4529A. Commentary:

As it is difficult to distinguish between different things in the darkness of night, similarly, in the period of spiritual darkness, before the advent of a Divine Reformer, good and bad people remain mixed

12. ^aAnd We have made the day
for the pursuits of life.⁴⁵³⁰

وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا ۝

13. ^bAnd We have built above
you seven strong *heavens*;⁴⁵³¹

وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شَدِيدًا ۝

14. And We have made *the sun*
a bright lamp.⁴⁵³²

وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجًا ۝

15. ^cAnd We send down from
the dripping clouds water
pouring forth abundantly,⁴⁵³³

وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاءً ثَجَّاجًا ۝

16. ^dThat We may bring forth
thereby grain and vegetation,

لِّنُخْرِجَ بِهِ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا ۝

^a17:13; 28:74. ^b23:18. ^c6:7; 71:12; 80:26. ^d80:28-29.

up, and it is after a Reformer's appearance that the good people are separated from the bad people.

4530. Commentary:

Just as man's body regains new vigour and strength after restful sleep at night, similarly, after a long period of sloth and inertia in relation to spiritual matters a people become invigorated to make new sacrifices when a Divine Reformer appears among them.

4531. Commentary:

The reference in the verse seemingly being to the seven major planets of the solar system, of which the sun is the centre, the verse means that the fact that God has created such a vast, complex and flawless system for the service of man inevitably leads to the conclusion that man has been placed on the earth to serve a specific, albeit a very noble and sublime purpose. Seven heavens may also refer to seven stages of spiritual

development of man mentioned in *Sūrah Al-Mu'minūn*.

4532. Important Words:

وهج (bright) is derived from وهج. They say وهجت النار i.e. the fire burned or blazed. يوم وهج means, a hot day. وهج means, burning very brightly; very hot; very shining (Lane & Aqrab).

4533. Important Words:

المعصرات (the dripping clouds) is derived from عصر which means, he pressed or squeezed the thing so as to force out its juice, etc. he aided or succoured or saved or preserved someone; he did some benefit to someone. They say أعصر السحاب i.e. the clouds were at the point of having rain pressed forth from them by the winds (Lane & Aqrab).

ثجاج (pouring forth abundantly) is derived from ثَجَّ. They say ثَجَّ الماء i.e. the water flowed or poured forth vehemently or much. مطر ثجاج means, rain pouring forth vehemently or much (Lane).

17. ^aAnd gardens of luxuriant growth.⁴⁵³⁴

وَجَنَّاتٍ أَلْفَافًا ۝

18. Surely, the Day of Decision has an appointed time:⁴⁴³⁵

إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَاتًا ۝

19. ^bThe day when the trumpet will be blown; and you will come in large groups;⁴⁵³⁶

يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ أَفْوَاجًا ۝

20. And the heaven shall be opened and shall become *all* doors;⁴⁵³⁷

وَفُتِحَتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَابًا ۝

21. ^cAnd the mountains shall be made to move and shall become *as if they were* a mirage.⁴⁵³⁸

وَسُيِّرَتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا ۝

^a80:30-31. ^b18:100; 20:103; 27:88; 36:52. ^c18:48; 52:11; 81:4.

4534. Commentary:

In these verses (7-17) some of the basic Divine bounties on which man's physical sustenance mainly depends have been mentioned, the implication being that God Who has made such adequate arrangement for the physical sustenance of man could not have omitted to make a similar provision for his spiritual sustenance. The verses also point to a striking parallelism between the physical and the spiritual universes. Just as the sun is the centre of the whole solar system, similarly the Holy Prophet is the pivotal point of the spiritual universe. Like the physical universe the spiritual universe has its "earth", "mountains", "rivers", etc.

4535. Commentary:

"The Day of Decision" may signify the Day of Resurrection or the day of the final and complete triumph of Truth and the utter defeat,

discomfiture and destruction of the forces of darkness—the day of the Fall of Mecca which was the centre and citadel of idolatry in Arabia.

4536. Commentary:

On the day of the Fall of Mecca the Quraish, as if by the blowing of the trumpet, were gathered before the Holy Prophet, before whom they placed their request that their tyrannies and transgressions might be forgiven and they might be accepted into the fold of Islam.

4537. Commentary:

The verse means that at that time heavenly signs will be shown in large numbers in support of the righteous, and to the confusion of the wrongdoers.

4538. Commentary:

The verse signifies that men of power and position will lose their authority or influence; or that before

22. Surely, Hell lies in ambush,

إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا ۖ

23. A home for the rebellious,

لِلطَّاغِينَ مَأْبَأًا ۖ

24. "Who will tarry therein for ages.⁴⁵³⁹

لُبِثِينَ فِيهَا أَحْقَابًا ۖ

25. They will taste therein neither sleep nor drink,⁴⁵⁴⁰

لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا ۖ

26. ^bSave boiling water and a stinking fluid, intensely cold—
4541

إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَغَسَّاقًا ۖ

27. A meet requital.

جَزَاءً وَفَاءً ۖ

^a11:108. ^b6:71; 69:37.

the onrush of the conquests of Islam, great and firmly established empires will crumble like mounds of loose sand and will disappear so completely that it would seem that their erstwhile existence was only an optical illusion.

4539. Important Words:

أَحْقَاب (Ages) is the plural of حَقْب which means, time; long time; a year or years; seventy years; eighty years or more (Lane & Mufradāt).

Commentary:

To continue the metaphor, the verse may refer to the long centuries when Islam was in ascendance and its enemies continued to burn in the fire of malice and envy at the uninterrupted progress and prosperity of Muslims.

As referring to the punishment of Hell, the verse signifies that though its duration will be very, very long yet it will not be eternal, the word

أَحْقَابًا as shown under Important Words signifying a limited period of time, however, long.

4540. Important Words:

برد (sleep) is inf. noun from برد which means, he slept; he died; it became cool, etc. برد (*bardun*) means, coolness; pleasantness; enjoyment; comfort; ease; sleep (Lane & Aqrab).

4541. Important Words:

غَسَّاق (stinking fluid intensely cold) means, ichor; the washings of wounds; intense cold that burns by reason of its coolness; cold and stinking. حميم و غَسَّاق means, boiling fluid and intensely cold and stinking drink (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The turbulent pursuit of evil, and cold indifference towards virtue, of wrongdoers will take the form of boiling water and intensely cold and stinking drink.

28. Verily, they feared not the reckoning,⁴⁵⁴²

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا ۝

29. ^aAnd rejected Our Signs totally.

وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا كِذَابًا ۝

30. ^bAnd everything have We recorded in a Book.⁴⁵⁴³

وَكُلِّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ كِتَابًا ۝

31. 'Taste ye therefore *the punishment*; We will give you no increase except in torment.'⁴⁵⁴⁴

فَذُوقُوا فَلَنْ نَزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا ۝

R. 2.

32. ^cVerily, for the righteous is a triumph:⁴⁵⁴⁵

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا ۝

^a2:40; 7:36-37; 22:58; 30:17; 64:11. ^b36:13. ^c4:176; 13:30; 14:24; 30:16; 68:35.

4542. Important Words:

يرجعون (feared) is formed from رجا . They say رجا الشيء i.e. he hoped to get the thing; he feared the thing (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The disbelievers did not believe in the Hereafter where they would be rewarded for their good deeds and had no apprehensions that they would be punished for their evil actions. Thus they lacked both the motives—hope and fear—which prompt a man to do good, and refrain from bad, deeds.

4543. Commentary:

Invention of television, wireless and other kindred instruments has established the fact that not only man's actions but even his spoken words can be preserved and reproduced. See also 24:25 & 36:66.

4544. Commentary:

Divine punishment will continue to dog the footsteps of disbelievers. Punishments in various forms will be inflicted upon them one after the other. This is the meaning of the words: "We will give you no increase except in torment."

4545. Important Words:

مَفَاز (triumph) is derived from فاز which means, he gained what he wished or desired; he was successful; he gained the victory. فاز به means he attained, acquired or won it. فاز من مكروه means, he became safe and secure from what he disliked. مَفَاز means victory; triumph, a place of safety or security; a cause or means of prosperity or success or of the attainment of that which he deserves; the state of safety. Contrarily it also means, a place of perdition (Lane).

33. Walled gardens and grapevines,⁴⁵⁴⁶

حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا ﴿٣٣﴾

34. "And young maidens of equal age,⁴⁵⁴⁷

وَكَوَاعِبَ أُنْرَابًا ﴿٣٤﴾

35. And overflowing cups.⁴⁵⁴⁸

وَكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا ﴿٣٥﴾

^a56:38.

4546. Commentary:

حدائق being the plural of حديقة which means, a garden surrounded by a wall or fence, the verse purports to say that as the righteous believers guarded themselves against sin and vice, their virtuous deeds will take the form of gardens protected by walls in the next life.

Among the paradisiacal blessings أعناب (grapevines) finds very frequent mention in the Quran. This is because grape is a delicious and substantial food, can be preserved for a long time, and causes intoxication. تقوى (righteousness) also possesses all these three characteristics. So grapevine is a fit reward for متقين (the righteous).

4547. Important Words:

For أنراب see 56:38.

كواعب (young maidens) is the plural of كاعبة or كاعب which is derived from كعب. They say كعبت الجارية i.e. the breasts of the girl began to swell or became prominent. كعب (ka'bun) means, any joint; nobility; glory; eminence. أعلی الله كعبهم means, may God exalt their glory. ذهب كعبهم means, their glory departed. جارية كاعب means, a girl whose breasts are beginning to swell (Aqrab & Lane).

Commentary:

The righteous will have companions or wives possessing freshness and vigour of youth and enjoying eminent positions, being of noble descent, and fired with high and noble ambitions. Elsewhere (56:35) in the Quran the companions of the righteous have been described as فرش مرفوعة i.e. noble spouses. For a full discussion of the nature and significance of heavenly blessings, see *Sūrah*s Ṭūr, Raḥmān and Wāqī'ah

4548. Important Words:

دهاق (overflowing) is derived from دھق. They say دھق الكأس i.e. he filled the cup. دھق الماء means, he vehemently poured the water. كأس دھاق means, a cup so full as to overflow (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The God-intoxicated pilgrim whose heart is so full of love of God as to overflow with it, will deservedly be given to drink cups, full of beverage that will add to spiritual intoxication which will not abate.

As life in the Hereafter will be a highly developed spiritual copy of the life of this world, therefore, the pleasures of that life have been described in words which we can understand. Otherwise the Quran

36. ^aTherein they will hear no idle talk nor lying:

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِدْبًا ۖ

37. A recompense from thy Lord—a gift amply sufficient.

جَزَاءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ عَطَاءٌ حِسَابًا ۖ

38. ^bLord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, the Gracious *God*. They shall not have the power to address Him.

رَبِّ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا
الرَّحْمَنُ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا ۖ

39. On the day when the Spirit and the angels will stand in rows, ^cthey shall not speak, except he whom the Gracious *God* will permit and who will speak only what is right.⁴⁵⁴⁹

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا
لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ
وَقَالَ صَوَابًا ۖ

40. That day is sure to come. So let him, who will, seek recourse unto his Lord.

ذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ ۚ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ
إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ مَآبًا ۖ

41. Verily, We have warned you of a punishment which is near at hand; ^da day when man will see what his hands have sent on before, and the disbeliever will

إِنَّا أَنْذَرْنَكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا ۖ يَوْمَ يَنْظُرُ
الْمُرءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدُهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَفِرُ
يَلَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ تَرَبًّا ۖ

^a19:63; 52:24; 56:26. ^b19:66; 37:6; 38:67; 44:8. ^c11:106; 20:110. ^d4:43.

says: "No soul knows what joy of the eyes is kept hidden for them" (32:18). And the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "No eye has seen them, nor has any ear heard of them, nor can any mind conceive them" (Bukhārī, *Kitāb bad' al-Khalq*).

4549. Commentary:

"The Spirit" here may signify the

perfect Spirit—the Holy Prophet; and "the day" may mean the Day of Resurrection. As applied to the present world, "the day" may signify the day of the Fall of Mecca and "the angels" may stand for the angelic Companions of the Holy Prophet who were with him on that day. For the روح see 16:3; 19:18; 32:10; 42:53.

say, 'Would that I were mere
dust!'⁴⁵⁵⁰

4550. Commentary:

"The punishment which is near at hand," seems to refer to the punishment which is meted out to the sinful disbelievers in this world. Elsewhere in the Quran (32:22) this punishment has been described as العذاب الأدنى (nearer punishment) as against العذاب الأكبر (the greater punishment) which is punishment in

the Hereafter. This nearer punishment took the form of the defeats which the disbelievers suffered at the hands of Muslims, and finally that of the Fall of Mecca when the cup of their utter mortification and humiliation became full to the brim. The verse gives a befitting picture of the state of mind of the Quraish leaders on that day.

CHAPTER 79

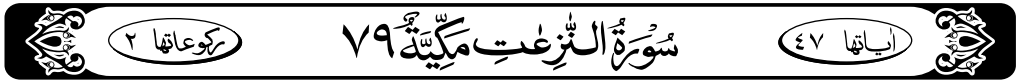
AN-NĀZI‘ĀT

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

The *Sūrah* takes its title from the first word of its opening verse. All competent authorities, including ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Abbās and Ibn Zubair, agree that, like its predecessor, this is a very early Meccan *Sūrah*. In the preceding *Sūrah*, the Muslims were promised power, prosperity and predominance in the world at a time when in the whole of Mecca hardly forty persons had accepted Islam. In the present *Sūrah*, however, light is shed on the ways and means by which the Muslims were to achieve greatness and glory, as well as on the signs and marks that point towards the imminent fulfilment of that promise.

The *Sūrah* opens with a description of some of the special traits of character of the Holy Prophet’s Companions and of other groups of righteous men who, by bringing into play these characteristics, achieve glory, power, victory and prominence. The *Sūrah* then points out that power will come to Muslims as a result of wars that will break the strength of the enemies of Islam. Pharaoh’s case is then cited to show that opposition to truth never goes unpunished. Next, we are told that in the extremely weak condition of early Muslims, prophecies about a glorious future of Islam seemed impossible of fulfilment, but the Great God Who created the vast heavens and earth, and Who placed on it rivers and mountains and highways had the power to make the impossible possible, as He can give a new life to the dead in the next world. Towards the close of the *Sūrah* it is stated that when the great event—the complete triumph of Truth or the Final Resurrection—takes place, the guilty will burn in the fire of Hell, but those who had lived a life of righteousness will enjoy the blessings of Paradise.



(AN-NĀZI'ĀT)

1. "In the name of Allah, the
Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By those who draw *people to
true faith* vigorously,⁴⁵⁵¹

وَالنَّازِعَاتِ غَرْقًا ①

3. And *by* those who tie *their
knots* firmly,⁴⁵⁵²

وَالنَّشِطَةِ نَشْطًا ②

^aSee 1:1.

4551. Important Words:

النازعات (who draw vigorously) is the plural of نازعة which is act. part. fem. gender from نزع. They say نزع الشيء عن مكانه i.e. he plucked, picked out, the thing from its place, or displaced it. نزع الأمير العامل means, the chief deposed the governor. نزع بالسهم means, he threw the arrow. نزع أباه means, he resembled his father. نزع في القوس means, he drew the bow with great vigour. نزع عن كذا means, he abstained from such a thing. نزع الى الشيء means, he desired the thing. نزع بفلان كذا means, he invited such a one to do it (Lane & Aqrab).

غرقا (vigorously) is used here in the sense of إغراقا which is inf. noun from أغرق. They say أغرقه i.e. he drowned him. أغرق الكأس means, he filled the wine cup. أغرق في القوس means, he drew the bow to the full. الإغراق signifies, the sending of the arrows to the utmost extent. أغرق في الشيء means, he exerted himself much or to the utmost in the thing. أغرق الناس فلانا means, the people fell upon him and overcame him (Lane & Aqrab).

In view of the different meanings of

the words نزع and أغرق the expression النازعات غرقا means: those beings or groups of men who root out evil from its roots; who do their duties to the best of their capacity; who carry out their plans effectively when deposing incompetent rulers; who fight their enemies with the utmost vigour; who abstain from evil things; who fully resemble their spiritual fathers; who are fired with intense zeal for the success of their mission and invite other people to it with fervour and enthusiasm.

4552. Important Words:

الناشطات (who tie the knots firmly) is the plural of ناشطة which is act. part. from نشط (nashata). They say نشط الحبل i.e. he tied the cord or rope firmly so as to form a knot. نشط الدلو means, he pulled out the bucket from the well without a pulley i.e. he had to exert himself much to pull out the bucket. نشط من بلد الى بلد means, he travelled from one town to another. نشط زيداً means, he pierced Zaid with an arrow. الناشطات means, those beings or groups of people who exert themselves vigorously in the discharge of their

4. And *by* those who glide along swiftly,⁴⁵⁵³

وَالسَّيِّحَاتِ سَبْحًا ۝

5. Then they *advance* and greatly excel *others*,

فَالسَّيِّقَاتِ سَبْقًا ۝

6. Then they administer the affairs *entrusted to them in an excellent manner*.⁴⁵⁵⁴

۝

فَالْمَدَبِّرَاتِ أَمْرًا ۝

duties (Lane & Aqrab).

4553. Important Words:

السَّيِّحَاتِ (who glide along swiftly) is the plural of سَاحِجَةٌ which is act. part. fem. gender from سَحَجَ. They say سَحَجَ الرجل i.e. the man occupied himself in the management of his affairs and in earning his subsistence. سَحَجَ فِي الْأَرْضِ means, he travelled far into the land. سَحِجَ فِي الْكَلَامِ means, he was profuse or eloquent in his speech. سَحِجَ فِي النَّهْرِ means, he swam in the canal and went far in swimming (Lane & Aqrab). السَّيِّحَاتِ means: (1) Those beings or groups of people who go far into the country in the pursuit of their quest. (2) Who are eloquent and powerful speakers. (3) Who swim fast, and go far in swimming i.e. who try to excel one another in carrying out their mission. (4) Who earn their own subsistence and are not a burden upon others.

4554. Important Words:

الْمَدَبِّرَاتِ (manage their affairs in an excellent manner) is the plural of مَدَبَّرَةٌ which is act. part. fem. gender from دَبَّرَ (dabbara). They say دَبَّرَ الْأَمْرَ i.e. he performed or executed the affair with thoughtfulness or consideration; he devised or planned the affair; he governed, managed, conducted or regulated the affair (Lane & Aqrab).

المديرات means, those beings or groups of people who plan, manage and conduct the affairs entrusted to them in an excellent manner.

Commentary:

The five verses (2-6) are taken to apply to angels by some scholars and commentators of the Quran, and وَادٍ being a particle of swearing and meaning "I call to witness," they have been understood as signifying that angels bear witness to the occurrence of the great event mentioned in vv. 7-8. But the evidence of angels is beyond human knowledge or comprehension. The verses, therefore, as the context shows, seem to refer to the Companions of the Holy Prophet and may be taken as embodying a prophecy about the spread of Islam far and wide through their selfless and vigorous efforts and a further prophecy about their being entrusted with the responsibility of conducting and administering public affairs of great importance with ability and justice. Briefly, the verses mention some of the prominent qualities of the Holy Prophet's Companions, viz. that they will diligently acquire spiritual knowledge, and will establish firm relationship with God, and then will carry the Message of Islam to the

7. *This will happen* on the day when the quaking *earth* shall quake^a,⁴⁵⁵⁵

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ ۝٧

8. And a second *quaking* shall follow it.⁴⁵⁵⁶

تَتَّبِعَهَا الرَّادِفَةُ ۝٨

9. On that day hearts will tremble,⁴⁵⁵⁷

قُلُوبٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاجِفَةٌ ۝٩

^a56:5-6; 73:15.

farthest ends of the earth, will try to excel one another in carrying out their mission and will attain high standards of righteousness in administering public affairs. See also 77:2-6.

4555. Important Words:

رجف (shall quake). رجف means, it was or became in a state of commotion, convulsion or disturbance. They say رجفت الارض i.e. the earth quaked. رجف القلب means, the heart became agitated. رجفته الحى means, the fever caused him to shiver. رجف القوم means, the people prepared for war. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that the prophecy proclaimed in the foregoing verses will be fulfilled as the result of fighting that will take place between God's righteous servants and the forces of evil in which the latter shall be routed (رجف meaning to prepare for war). The utter defeat of disbelief announced long time beforehand will constitute a strong proof of the Resurrection. The verse may apply to the Day of Reckoning also.

4556. Important Words:

الرادفة (that which follows) is derived

from ردت which means, it followed or came after. ردفهم الامر means, the event came upon them suddenly so as to overwhelm them (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that once the fighting starts between Muslims and infidels, it will not cease till the forces of evil are fully and finally crushed as the result of successive blows.

4557. Commentary:

When disbelievers will suffer defeats in quick succession and they will see Islam prevailing and predominating, then will a feeling of disquietude seize them and doubts about the possibility of the Resurrection will begin to assail their minds. They will be led to think that the triumph of Islam which was predicted at a time when the new Faith was engaged in a seemingly hopeless struggle for its very existence, and which was declared to be a piece of evidence in support of the Last Day, had come true. Therefore the Resurrection was also true.

10. ^aAnd their eyes will be cast down—⁴⁵⁵⁸ أَبْصَارُهَا خَاشِعَةٌ ۝
11. They will say, ‘Shall we *really* be restored to our former state?’⁴⁵⁵⁹ يَقُولُونَ ءَإِنَّا لَمَرْدُودُونَ فِي الْحَافِرَةِ ۝
12. ^bWhat! even when we are rotten bones?’ ءَإِذَا كُنَّا عِظَامًا نَّخِرَةً ۝
13. They will say, ‘Then that indeed would be a losing return.’ قَالُوا تِلْكَ إِذَا كَرَّزَتْ خَاسِرَةٌ ۝
14. It will only be a single cry, فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ ۝
15. And behold! they will *all* come out in the open.⁴⁵⁶⁰ فَإِذَا هُمْ بِالسَّاهِرَةِ ۝
16. ^cHas the story of Moses reached thee?⁴⁵⁶¹ هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَى ۝

^a70:45. ^b17:50; 36:79; 46:34. ^c19:52; 20:10.

4558. Commentary:

The disbelievers will get the worst of the war and their pride will be humbled into dust.

4559. Important Words:

الحافرة (former state) is derived from حفر i.e. he dug the ground. حافرة means, the original state of a thing; turning back of a thing so that the end thereof is brought back to its beginning. رجع الى حافرته i.e. he became old and decrepit. رجع على حافرته means, he returned by the way by which he had gone. The verse means, "shall we be restored to our first state, i.e. to life on earth as we were" (Lane & Aqrab).

4560. Commentary:

The reference in the verse seems to

be to the Battle of Badr when disbelievers had a foretaste of the crushing defeats which they were destined subsequently to suffer at the hands of Muslims.

4561. Commentary:

Here the Meccan disbelievers are told that they are not the first to reject God's Message. Divine Messengers had come before. They were also rejected, opposed and persecuted. Moses, was one of them. He preached the Divine Message to Pharaoh, who courted his own destruction by refusing to listen to the voice of God. The Holy Prophet's opponents should take a lesson from the ignominious end to which Pharaoh came.

17. ^aWhen his Lord called him in the holy Valley of Ṭuwā, *saying*,

إِذْ نَادَاهُ رَبُّهُ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ۖ

18. ^bGo thou to Pharaoh; he has rebelled.

إِذْ هَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ ۖ

19. And say to him, “Wouldst thou *like to* be purified?

فَقُلْ هَلْ لَّكَ إِلَىٰ أَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ ۖ

20. And I will guide thee to thy Lord so that thou mayest fear Him.” ’

وَأَهْدِيكَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَتَخْشَىٰ ۚ

21. ^cSo he showed him the great Sign,⁴⁵⁶²

فَأَرَاهُ الْآيَةَ الْكُبْرَىٰ ۖ

22. But he rejected *him* and disobeyed.

فَكَذَّبَ وَعَصَىٰ ۖ

23. Then he turned away from Moses, striving against him.

ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ يَسْعَىٰ ۖ

24. And he gathered his people and proclaimed,

فَحَشَرَ فَنَادَىٰ ۖ

25. Saying, ‘I am your Lord, the Most High.’^d

فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَىٰ ۖ

26. So Allah seized him with the punishment of the Hereafter and the present world.⁴⁵⁶³

فَاَخَذَهُ اللَّهُ نَكَالَ الْآخِرَةِ وَالْأُولَىٰ ۖ

^a19:53; 20:12-13; 28:31. ^b20:44. ^c20:57. ^d26:30; 28:39.

4562. Commentary:

"The great Sign" was the sign of the rod, which had precedence over all other signs of Moses (20:21). When confronted with the magic of the magicians it was his rod that swallowed that which the magicians had wrought (20:70). When Moses had to cross the sea he was enjoined to strike the sea with his rod (26:64); and when he prayed for water for his

people he was told to strike the rock with his rod (2:61). The sign of the white hand was shown only after the sign of the rod (20:23).

4563. Commentary:

The basic doctrine of Islam (in fact of all religions), second in importance only to belief in the existence of God, is belief in life after death. The primary mission of all Divine Prophets was to instil this belief in

27. Therein surely is a lesson for him who fears his Lord.

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّمَنِ يَخْشَى ۝٧٧

R. 2.

28. Are you harder to create or the heaven that He has built?⁴⁵⁶⁴

ءَأَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمِ السَّمَاءُ ۖ بَنَاهَا ۝٧٨

29. "He has raised the height thereof and has made it perfect.⁴⁵⁶⁵

رَفَعَ سَمَكُمَا فَسَوَّيَاهَا ۝٧٩

30. And He has made its night dark^b; and has brought forth the morn thereof;⁴⁵⁶⁶

وَأَغْطَشَ لَيْلَهَا وَأَخْرَجَ ضُحَاهَا ۝٨٠

^a21:33; 31:11. ^b17:13.

the minds of men. The Quran has given four arguments in support of this belief: (a) Complete knowledge of God about a thing which presupposes His power to create it. (b) Creation and development of man in the mother's womb, from an insignificant sperm drop into a full-fledged human being. (c) Rising up of a people from the depths of moral degradation to the heights of spiritual glory through a Divine Reformer, such rising, in Quranic terminology, being known as their resurrection. (d) The triumph of a Prophet over his enemies, predicted at a time when the Prophet and his community are fighting for their very life, and the human mind cannot even conceive of a happy sequel to their efforts. It is to this last argument that reference has been made in the verse under comment.

Incidentally, the verse refers to the double punishment of disbelievers—in this life and in the Hereafter.

4564. Commentary:

The complex, but flawless and consummate, creation of the solar system, constitutes, indeed, an invincible argument about life after death, viz. that the Great God Who could bring into being from nothing such a vast universe could also give man, who is but a mere speck in it, a new life after he is dead. This is the purport of the present and the following six verses. The verses further point out that when God has created such a complete system for man's physical needs. He could not have failed to make similar provision for his spiritual needs.

4565. Commentary:

The verse points to the fact that it is due to the sun, the moon and other heavenly bodies that life exists on earth.

4566. Commentary:

The phenomenon of night and day, which pertains to the earth, has been

31. And the earth, along with it,
He spread forth^a.**4567**

وَالْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ دَحَاهَا^{٣١}

32. ^bHe produced therefrom its
water and its pasture,

أَخْرَجَ مِنْهَا مَاءَهَا وَمَرْعَاهَا^{٣٢}

33. ^cAnd the mountains, He
made them firm.

وَالْجِبَالَ أَرْسَاهَا^{٣٣}

34. ^d*All this is* a provision for
you and for your cattle.

مَتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ^{٣٤}

35. ^eBut when the great
Calamity comes, **4568**

فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الطَّامَةُ الْكُبْرَى^{٣٥}

36. ^fThe day when man will call
to mind *all* that he strove for,

يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا سَعَى^{٣٦}

37. ^gAnd Hell will be made
manifest to him who sees, **4569**

وَبُرْزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَنْ يَرَى^{٣٧}

^a20:54; 51:49. ^b20:54; 50:8. ^c50:8. ^d80:33. ^e74:36; 80:34. ^f89:24. ^g26:92.

attributed to the heaven because it is
due to the working of the solar
system that we have day and night.

4567. Important Words:

دحاهما (spread it). دحا الله الارض means,
God had spread, expanded or
extended the earth. دحا الحجر بيده means,
he threw or cast the stone with his
hand. دحا البطن means, the belly was or
became inflated (Lane).

Commentary:

Besides the meaning given in the
text the verse signifies that the earth
became cast away from a bigger mass
which shows that it was part of a
larger planet from which it became
separated in the very remote past.

4568. Important Words:

الطامة (Calamity) is derived from طم.
They say طم الوادي i.e. the torrent of the
valley rose high and predominated.

طم الامر means, the affair was or
became great or formidable. طمت الفتنة
means, the conflict was or became
severe. طامة means, a calamity that
predominates over others; a
formidable thing; a vehement cry that
overcomes everything. (Lane &
Aqrab).

Commentary:

Besides the Final Resurrection the
reference here may be to the Fall of
Mecca which proved to be a great
calamity for the Meccans.

4569. Commentary:

Hell has been mentioned twice, in
the present verse and in v. 40
signifying the punishment of this
world and of the Hereafter. This
double punishment is mentioned in v.
26 above in the words نكال الاخرة و الاول i.e.
punishment of the Hereafter and of

38. Then, as for him who rebels,

فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَى^{٣٨}

39. And who chooses the life of this world,

وَأَثَرَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا^{٣٩}

40. The fire of Hell shall surely be *his* abode.

فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى^{٤٠}

41. "But as for him who fears to stand before his Lord, and restrains his soul from evil desires,⁴⁵⁷⁰

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَى^{٤١}

42. The Garden shall surely be *his* abode.

فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى^{٤٢}

43. ^bThey ask thee concerning the Hour: 'When will it come?'

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسُهَا^{٤٣}

44. Wherein art thou concerned with the declaration of *its coming*?

فِيمَ أَنْتَ مِنْ ذِكْرِهَا^{٤٤}

45. The ultimate *knowledge* of it rests with thy Lord.

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنْتَهَاهَا^{٤٥}

46. Thou art only a Warner unto him who fears it.

إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنْذِرٌ مَّنْ يَخْشَاهَا^{٤٦}

47. ^cOn the day when they see it, *it will be* as if they had not tarried *in the world* but an evening or a morn thereof.^{4570A}

كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَاهَا^{٤٧}

^a23:58; 55:47. ^b7:188; 33:64; 51:13. ^c10:46; 30:56; 46:36; 79:47.

the present world.

4570. Commentary:

The verse means: (1) who fears to stand before his Lord as a guilty person; (2) who fears the Majesty of his Lord.

4570A. Commentary:

It is disbelievers' way that

whenever they are warned that they will be overtaken by Divine punishment if they rejected the Divine Message they impudently demand from their Prophet, half mockingly and half in doubt, that he should let them know the exact time when the punishment will take place. In verses 43-46 they are told that

knowledge of the time when they would render themselves deserving of God's punishment is within God's own special prerogative; the Prophet's duty is only to administer a warning to them. But, says the verse, it is not the time, or the place or the manner or the form of the punishment that matters. What matters is that

disbelievers should realize that when Divine punishment comes, it will be so swift, sudden and severe that they will feel as if the period of their prosperity and enjoyment was of a very short duration, and that the punishment had come too soon. This seems to be the purport of vv. 43-47.

CHAPTER 80

‘ABASA

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Date of Revelation and Context

This *Sūrah*, like the two preceding it, with whose subject matter it has a close association, is among those *Sūrahs* which were revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Call. Nöldeke and Muir, besides Muslim scholars, subscribe to this view. The *Sūrah* takes its title from the opening verse and deals with an incident in the Holy Prophet's life which, though of not much historical importance, contains a lesson of abiding moral significance.

Towards the end of the preceding chapter, the Holy Prophet was told that his duty was confined to conveying the Divine Message to his people. In the present *Sūrah* he is enjoined to be more careful of and pay greater attention to the poor, God-fearing believers who were likely to profit from his preachings more than the conceited and arrogant disbelievers. Moreover, in the previous *Sūrah*, it was stated that the knowledge about "the Hour," rested with God; in this *Sūrah* it is added that the people who will bring about in themselves a moral resurrection ("the Hour") spoken of in the preceding *Sūrah* were known only to God. They are those poor people who are small in the eyes of proud and worldly-minded disbelievers but are great in the sight of God and who in fact, possess all the qualities of leadership.

Subject Matter

The *Sūrah* begins to deal with the incident of ‘Abdullāh bin Umī Maktūm, a poor blind man, and proceeds to teach the lesson, viz. that it is not worldly riches and social status which determine the real worth of a person but the goodness of heart and willingness on his part to listen to truth and accept it. The *Sūrah* also constitutes an eloquent commentary on the Holy Prophet's regard for the susceptibilities of the poor and oppressed people, and proceeds to say that the Quran will raise them to great eminence. It further says that being the Last Divine Message for mankind it will be respected and read all over the world and will continue to be protected and preserved. The disbelievers are then warned that they are rejecting this great and glorious Divine Message—the Quran—to their own spiritual detriment, and are so foolish as not to understand that God who created man from an insignificant fluid and then endowed him with great natural powers and faculties and made excellent provision for his physical sustenance, could not have ignored to make similar provision for his moral and spiritual development. He has made this provision by the revelation of His Word for their guidance. The *Sūrah* ends on a note of warning to disbelievers that if they rejected the Quranic

Message and persisted in opposition to the Prophet they will have to face a day of reckoning when misery, shame and ignominy will be their lot. The righteous believers, however, will reside in "Gardens of Bliss," their faces beaming with divine joy and happiness.



(‘ABASA)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bHe frowned and turned aside,⁴⁵⁷¹

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى ②

3. Because there came to him the blind man.

أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى ③

4. And what makes thee know that he might be seeking to purify himself,⁴⁵⁷²

وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزَكِّي ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b74:23.

4571. Commentary:

The verse refers to a well-known historical incident. As the Holy Prophet was engaged one day in a talk with some of the Quraish Chiefs about some matters of belief, there came up ‘Abdullāh bin Ummi Maktūm and, thinking that the Holy Prophet’s precious time and energy were being wasted on the confirmed leaders of disbelief, he sought to divert his attention and asked to be enlightened on some religious questions. The Holy Prophet disliked the intrusion, and showed his displeasure by turning aside from ‘Abdullāh (Ṭabarī and Bayān). The incident, while it showed the Holy Prophet’s solicitude for the spiritual well-being of the Quraish leaders, in that he continued his discourse with them and paid no heed to ‘Abdullāh’s interruption was evidence of his great regard for the tender susceptibilities of the poor blind man, inasmuch as the Prophet merely turned his face from ‘Abdullāh, an act which the

latter could not see, not saying even a word of reproach or disapprobation to him for his inopportune and rash interruption. The verse thus throws a flood of light on the moral stature of the Holy Prophet; and instead of implying a reproach or rebuke, as some commentators seem to think, enjoins him and, through him, his followers, to have due regard for the tender susceptibilities of the poor, the humble, and the downtrodden.

The words "he frowned and turned aside," according to most commentators of the Quran refer to the Holy Prophet, but more correctly they seem to refer to the arrogant attitude of the conceited Quraish leader with whom the Holy Prophet was engaged in conversation and who turned away his face disdainfully, thinking how a humble and lowly person could dare interfere in the talk he was having with the Prophet.

4572. Commentary:

The pronoun "thee" has been taken

5. Or he may take heed and the reminder may benefit him?

أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الذِّكْرُ ٥

6. As for him who is disdainfully indifferent. **4573**

أَمَّا مَنْ اسْتَغْنَى ٦

7. Unto him thou dost pay attention, **4574**

فَأَنْتَ لَهُ تَصَدَّى ٧

8. Though thou art not responsible if he does not become purified. **4574A**

وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَّكَّى ٨

9. But he who comes to thee hastening,

وَأَمَّا مَنْ جَاءَكَ يَسْعَى ٩

as applying to the Holy Prophet and the pronoun "he" to the Quraish leader with whom the Holy Prophet was holding conversation. But "thee" may more appropriately be applied to those carping critics who, being hypersensitive, would not relish the attitude of the Holy Prophet on that occasion which was the only right and correct attitude for him to adopt.

4573. Important Words:

استغنى (is disdainfully indifferent) is derived from غنى which means, he became rich. استغنى means, he wanted to be rich. استغنى عنه به means, he became indifferent after he got what he desired. The verse thus means, he desires wealth, or he is indifferent or careless (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

See a collective note, on this and the following six verses, on v. 11 below.

4574. Important Words:

تصدى (thou dost pay attention) is derived from صد. They say تصدى له i.e.

he addressed or applied or directed himself or his regard or attention or mind to him or it; and he asked him or petitioned him for a thing that he wanted; he inclined towards him or it; he raised head towards him or it (Lane & Aqrab).

4574A. Commentary:

The verse seems to constitute an effective justification of the Holy Prophet's attitude towards ‘Abdullāh bin Um̄mi Maktūm. It purports to say that it would have brought no good to the Holy Prophet if ‘Abdullāh or, for that matter, the Quraish leader did or did not benefit by his talk. Thus the attitude of fancied indifference towards ‘Abdullāh or of deference towards the Quraish leader shown by the Holy Prophet proceeded from no consideration of any personal interest. The Holy Prophet's reaction was solely due to compliance with the commandments of the Shari‘ah about behaving kindly and courteously towards one's guests and visitors.

10. And he fears *God*,

وَهُوَ يَخْشَى ۝١٠

11. Him dost thou neglect.⁴⁵⁷⁵

فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّى ۝١١

12. Nay! surely it is a
Reminder^a. ⁴⁵⁷⁶

كَأَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ ۝١٢

13. So let him who desires pay
heed to it—

يُذَكِّرْ

فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَرْهُ ۝١٣

14. Contained in honoured
Books,⁴⁵⁷⁷

فِي صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ ۝١٤

^a20:4; 73:20; 74:55; 76:30.

4575. Commentary:

If vv. 6-11 are taken to apply to the Holy Prophet, then the particle **أَمْ** in the 6th verse would signify "how could it be that" i.e. it cannot be; and these verses would be interpreted as: "How could it be possible that thou shouldst pay attention to him who is disdainfully indifferent and should neglect him who fears God and comes to thee hastening." These verses again constitute an eloquent commentary on the Holy Prophet's regard for the humble and the suppressed. But the verse under comment may be applied more fittingly to those critics who would find fault with the Holy Prophet's attitude towards 'Abdullāh bin Ummi Maktūm on that particular occasion but who themselves, in their conceit and pride, would behave arrogantly towards the poor and the lowly. Thus these verses have been used ironically; they bring home to the critics their own state of mind; and do not refer to any weakness of the Holy Prophet. The next verse also supports

this interpretation.

4576. Important Words:

﴿ (nay) means, nay; by no means; on the contrary. The particle is also used to remonstrate with a person and to tell him that he is saying something which is not correct (Aqrab & Baqā).

Commentary:

The verse means that the charge of indifference is not correct. Moreover, why at all the Prophet should have adopted an attitude of sullen indifference towards a poor man when the Quran, being meant equally for the rich and the poor, it was not only inconsistent with his own high moral stature but also against human reason to do so? What the Prophet did on the specific occasion was dictated by the exigency of the occasion and was demanded by the situation and, therefore, was the right thing to do.

4577. Commentary:

The Quran being a compendium of all permanent and imperishable teachings which are embodied in various revealed Scriptures,

15. Exalted, purified,

مَرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ ۝١٥

16. In the hands of writers,⁴⁵⁷⁸

بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ ۝١٦

17. Noble and virtuous.⁴⁵⁷⁹

كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ ۝١٧

18. Ruin seize man! how ungrateful he is!⁴⁵⁸⁰

قَتَلَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا أَكْفَرَهُ ۝١٨

19. From what does He create him?

مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ ۝١٩

20. "From a sperm drop! He creates him and proportions him;⁴⁵⁸¹

مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ ۖ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَّرَهُ ۝٢٠

21. Then He makes the way easy for him,

ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ ۝٢١

^a18:38; 35:12; 36:78; 40:68.

constitutes, as it were, a collection of all heavenly Books. This is the significance of the words "Contained in honoured Books." The verse further says that the Quran will be written in the form of a Book, will be honoured and respected and will be protected and preserved against every kind of interpolation and interference.

4578. Important Words:

سفرة (writers) is derived from سفر which means, he travelled. They say سفر الكتاب i.e. he wrote the book. سفر الصبح means, the morning shone forth (Lane & Aqrab).

4579. Commentary:

As against three prominent characteristics of the Quran mentioned in the preceding vv. 12-15 above, three equally marked qualities of the bearers of its Message have

been mentioned in this and the preceding verse. The bearers of the Quranic Message are not only noble and virtuous but travel far and wide to explain and spread it.

4580. Commentary:

How ungrateful are disbelievers, says the verse, that they should reject such a great and noble Book as the Quran which has been revealed to raise them from the dust and squalor of moral turpitude to the heights of spiritual glory.

4581. Commentary:

The verse draws pointed attention to the very humble beginning of man, so that it may be brought home to him that God having created him from such an insignificant thing as a sperm drop, did not endow him with an infinite capacity for progress or

22. Then He causes him to die
and assigns a grave to him;⁴⁵⁸²

ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ ۝^{٢٢}

23. Then, when He pleases, He
will raise him up again.⁴⁵⁸³

ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنشَرَهُ ۝^{٢٣}

24. Nay! he has not yet done
what He commanded him *to*
do.⁴⁵⁸⁴

كَلَّا لَمَّا يَقْضِ مَا أَمَرَهُ ۝^{٢٤}

25. Now let man look at his
food:

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ ۝^{٢٥}

26. ^aHow We pour down water
in abundance,

أَنَّا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا ۝^{٢٦}

27. Then We cleave the earth—
a proper cleaving—

ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا ۝^{٢٧}

28. ^bThen We cause to grow
therein grain,

فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا ۝^{٢٨}

29. And grapes and vegetables,

وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا ۝^{٢٩}

30. And the olive and the date-
palm,

وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ۝^{٣٠}

^a71:12; 78:15. ^b78:16.

did not reveal the Quran for his guidance, for nothing. Man has been created to pursue a noble ideal and achieve a great goal.

4582. Commentary:

The natural powers with which man has been endowed signify that a very high spiritual destiny awaits him. But the physical body of man is too dense for an immeasurable and unending spiritual progress. To achieve his high destiny, God has decreed death for man, so that when the human soul is freed from the trammels of its physical tabernacle it should travel on the path leading to the goal of its

infinite progress.

The 'grave' in this verse does not mean the tomb to which a dead body is consigned, but the state of the soul after death.

4583. Commentary:

Man's humble and insignificant beginning, his having been endowed with marvellous natural powers, his death—all this shows (says the verse) that death is not the end of man but that there is a life beyond.

4584. Commentary:

Though God endowed man with great natural faculties and revealed Himself to him through His

31. ^aAnd walled gardens thickly planted,

وَحَدَائِقٍ غُلْبًا ۝

32. And fruits and herbage;

وَفَاكِهَةً وَأَبًّا ۝

33. ^bProvision for you and your cattle.⁴⁵⁸⁵

مَتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ ۝

34. ^cBut when the deafening Shout comes,⁴⁵⁸⁶

فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاحَةُ ۝

35. ^dOn the day when a man flees from his brother,

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ ۝

36. And *from* his mother and his father,

وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ ۝

37. And *from* his wife ^eand his sons,

وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ ۝

38. Every man among them that day will have concern enough to make him indifferent *to others*.⁴⁵⁸⁷

لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ ۝

^a78:17. ^b79:34. ^c79:35. ^d44:42. ^e70:13.

Messengers and heavenly Scriptures, yet unregenerate man fails to carry out the purpose of his creation which the Quran has summarized in the words: ما خلقت الجن و الانس الا ليعبدون i.e. man has been created to develop divine attributes and imbue himself with divine personality.

4585. Commentary:

These verses (v. 25-33) contain a beautiful description of the consummate arrangement that God has made for the physical sustenance of man, and from it the moral is drawn that when God has made so complete and full a provision for man's temporary and limited life, He

could not have omitted to make a similar provision for his everlasting spiritual life, and further that if there was no life after death, God would not have made such consummate arrangement.

4586. Commentary:

The word الصَّاحَةُ (the deafening shout) signifies that as disbelievers turned a deaf ear to Quranic teaching, the punishment that will be inflicted upon them will take the form of "a deafening shout."

4587. Commentary:

In time of tribulation and sorrow a man is apt to forget even his nearest relations. He has his own troubles to

39. ^aOn that day *some* faces will
be bright,

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ ۝٣٩

40. Laughing, joyous!

صَاحِكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ ۝٤٠

41. ^bAnd *some* faces, on that
day, will have dust upon them,

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ ۝٤١

42. ^cDarkness covering them.

تَرْهُقَهَا قَتَرَةٌ ۝٤٢

43. Those are the disbelievers,
doers of evil. **4588**

أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرَةُ الْفَجَرَةُ ۝٤٣

^a3:107; 10:27. ^b68:44; 75:25; 88:3-4. ^c14:51; 23:105.

keep him occupied. Such will be the condition of disbelievers on the Day of Resurrection. The advent of the Holy Prophet has also been likened to "Resurrection" in the Quran, as also the advent of every great Divine Reformer. With the advent of a Divine Messenger a wide gulf intervenes between believers and disbelievers, however closely related they may be. It is to this unpalatable truth that Jesus referred when he said:

I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, young wife against her mother-in-

law. (Matt. 10:35).

4588. Important Words:

كُفْرَةٌ is plural of كَفَرٌ which being act. part. from كَفَرَ means: (1) one who disbelieves in the Divine Message; (2) one who conceals a thing (Aqrab).

فَجْرَةٌ is plural of فَاجِرٌ which is act. part. from فَجَرَ and means: (1) one who turns away from truth; (2) a false swearer of oaths; (3) a rejecter and disbeliever of Divine commandments; (4) a shameless fellow; and (5) one whose affair has become spoilt (Lane & Aqrab).

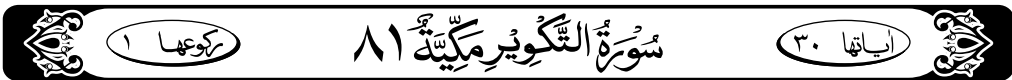
CHAPTER 81

AT-TAKWĪR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

The *Sūrah* takes its title from the word كُوِّرَتْ (is folded up), occurring in the opening verse. It was revealed early at Mecca, very probably in the 6th year of the Call or even earlier. The preceding *Sūrahs* had dealt with the subject of Final Resurrection and with the great and marvellous revolution which was brought about by the Holy Prophet and which has been called "resurrection" in the Quran. This resurrection was to take place twice, first by the advent of the Holy Prophet himself and the revelation of the Quran, and second by his Second Coming in the person of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi to which a clear reference is made in 62:4. It is this second renaissance of Islam at the hands of the Promised Messiah, and the great changes which were to take place in his time in the world, which this *Sūrah* speaks of. The *Sūrah* opens with a description of those changes, and follows it up with a fleeting reference to the moral degeneration of Muslims at that time and to the causes thereof, and ends with striking a note of optimism and cheerfulness to the Muslims, holding out the promise that eventually the night of degradation of Muslims will give place to the dawn of success, because Islam, being God's last Message for the whole of mankind, has come to stay.



(AT-TAKWĪR)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the sun is wrapped up,⁴⁵⁸⁹

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ②

3. And when the stars are obscured,⁴⁵⁹⁰

وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ③

^aSee 1:1.

4589. Important Words:

كُوِّرَتْ (wrapped up) is derived from كَوَّرَ. They say كَوَّرَ العِمَامَةَ i.e. he wound round the turban upon his head. كُوِّرَتْ الشَّمْسُ means, the light of the sun became folded up or became dim or it disappeared or the sun became eclipsed (Aqrab). إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ means, when the sun shall be wound with darkness like a turban; or when it shall be wrapped up and have its light taken away or shall lose its light; or shall be divested of its light; or shall be cast away. These are some of the meanings of the verse given by Jalālāin, Qatādah, 'Ikrimah and Mujāhid as quoted by Lane.

Commentary:

It is generally said that this *Sūrah* deals with the Resurrection, when the laws and processes of nature as we know them, will cease to operate. But this does not appear to be plausible, the whole trend and tenor of the *Sūrah* speaks so patently of the conditions which obtain in the physical world that some of the verses will lose all sense if they are taken as referring to the Final

Resurrection. In fact, the *Sūrah* speaks of the great changes that have taken place in the material world and in human life since the time of the Holy Prophet, particularly in our own time. The *Sūrah* thus makes a special reference to the present era—the era of the Promised Messiah. Some verses may equally be interpreted literally as well as metaphorically.

The Holy Prophet is described in the Quran as the Bright Sun (25:62). The verse, therefore, may mean: When there will be spiritual darkness all over the world—the light of the Spiritual Sun having become dim or having disappeared altogether. Or the verse may refer to the eclipse of the sun and the moon, which according to a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet, was to take place in the time of the Mahdi, a phenomenon that the world had never witnessed before (Quṭnī, p. 188). A reference to this is also to be found in 75:10. This predicted eclipse of the sun and the moon took place in 1894 in the month of Ramadan.

4590. Commentary:

The word النُّجُوم meaning stars,

4. ^aAnd when the mountains are made to move.⁴⁵⁹¹

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ۝

5. And when the she-camels, ten months with young, are abandoned,⁴⁵⁹²

وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ۝

^a18:48; 52:11; 78:21.

signifies religious ulema. The well-known ḥadīth أصحابي كالنجوم بأيهم اقتديتم اهتديتم i.e. My Companions are like stars, whomsoever you will follow, you will receive right guidance (Baihaqī), supports this meaning. In this sense of the word, the verse means: "When religious leaders become corrupt, and cease to exercise any influence." Literally, the verse means: "When stars fall in large numbers." This may be a reference to the falling of stars in exceptionally large numbers in 1885 when the Promised Messiah, Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement, had already announced his claim to be a Divine Reformer.

4591. Important Words:

سُيِّرَتْ (made to move) is derived from سار i.e. he or it went, passed away or departed. سيرة من بلدة means, he expelled him from his town (Lane & Aqrab).

الجبال (mountains) is plural of جبل which means, a mountain; a man who does not move from his place, i.e. a big man; the chief of a people; a learned man (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse means: When mountains will be blown away by dynamite and roads will be made through them; or (metaphorically) when men wielding

great authority and influence will be expelled from their own countries; or when the authority of rulers will become undermined.

4592. Important Words:

عِشَارٌ (she-camels, ten months with young) is the plural of عِشْرَاءُ which means, a she-camel that has been ten months with young. عِشَارٌ is applied to she-camels until some of them have brought forth and others are expected to bring forth. Such she-camels were considered to be a very valuable possession by the Arabs (Lane & Aqrab).

عُطِّلَتْ (are abandoned) is derived from عَطَلَ. They say عطل الأجير i.e. the hired man was without occupation. عطل الشيء (attala) means, he left the thing unattended or neglected. عطل البئر means, he left off going to the well for taking water (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to the replacement of camels by better and swifter means of transport—railway trains, steamships motor cars, aeroplanes, etc. Or the verse may signify that, in Promised Mahdi's time, camels—she-camels ten months with young—will lose their importance, even in Arabia. There is a pointed reference to camels being replaced by other means of transport

6. And when the beasts are gathered together,⁴⁵⁹³

وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ۖ

7. ^aAnd when the seas are made to flow forth *one into the other*,⁴⁵⁹⁴

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ۖ

^a52:7; 82:4.

in a saying of the Holy Prophet which is to the effect: وليترك القلاص فلا يسعى عليها i.e. the camels will be abandoned and will not be used for going from one place to another (Muslim).

4593. Important Words:

حشرت (gathered together) is passive voice in the fem. gen. from حشر. They say حشر الناس i.e. he collected the people. حشر الجمع means, he drove the people from one place to another. حشره means, he banished him from his native country. حشرت الوحوش means, the wild beasts died or were destroyed (Lane)

Commentary:

In view of different meanings of the root word حشر the verse would signify: When animals will be collected in zoos or when primitive people will be settled in organized, civil communities; or when they will be compelled to leave their homelands, as the natives in Uganda and the Kenya Colony, etc. were told to till their lands or go out; or when they will be destroyed as the Native Americans in the United States of America and the Aborigines in Australia and New Zealand, etc. have been practically annihilated.

4594. Important Words:

البحار (seas) is the plural of بحر which

means, a sea; a great river; a spacious place comprising a large quantity of water. It is also the plural of بركة which means, a town or village (Lane & Aqrab).

سجرت (made to flow forth). They say سجر الماء النهر i.e. the water filled the stream. سجر الماء (sajjara) means, he made the water to flow forth whithersoever it would. Thus اذا البحار سجرت means: When the seas are filled; when the rivers are made to flow into one another; when the seas will be set on fire; when the seas will meet together and become one; when towns or cities will swell with their populations (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In view of different meanings of the words سجرت and البحار given under Important Words the verse signifies: When the waters of rivers will be drained away for irrigation and other purposes, and rivers will be linked up together for these purposes; when in sea battles very large ships will be set on fire and it would seem as if the seas were on fire; when large oceans will be joined together by means of canals; when the rural population will go into towns and cities and they will overflow with their inhabitants.

8. And when people are brought together,⁴⁵⁹⁵

وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ۝٨

9. And when the girl-child buried alive is questioned about,

وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُدَةُ سُئِلَتْ ۝٩

10. 'For what crime was she killed?'⁴⁵⁹⁶

بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ ۝١٠

11. And when books are spread abroad,⁴⁵⁹⁷

وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ ۝١١

12. And when the heaven is laid bare,⁴⁵⁹⁸

وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ كُشِطَتْ ۝١٢

13. And when Hell is set ablaze,⁴⁵⁹⁹

وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ ۝١٣

4595. Commentary:

The verse means: When the means of transport and communication will become so developed and when intercourse between peoples living in far off lands will become so easy and frequent as to make them unite into one people. Or the verse may signify that people holding analogous social or political views will form themselves into "parties." The reference may be to the Labour, Communist, Nazi and Fascist parties.

4596. Commentary:

The burying or burning alive of girls will be declared a capital crime.

4597. Commentary:

The reference clearly seems to be to the vast circulation of newspapers, journals, and books and to the system of libraries and reading rooms and such other places and means of spreading knowledge in the latter days—in the time of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi.

4598. Important Words:

كشط (laid bare). كشط الشيء means, he removed, took off or stripped off from the thing what had covered it. كشطت البعير means, I skinned the camel. كشط هروعه means, his fright was removed (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse may be to the vast strides that the science of astronomy has made in the latter days. The advance in this branch of science during the past decade has startled the world.

The verse also signifies that with the advent of the Promised Messiah the doors of spiritual sciences will be thrown wide open.

4599. Commentary:

On account of the sinful and iniquitous behaviour of man, God's wrath will be kindled, and a veritable Hell will be let loose upon the world in the form of destructive wars in which all that human civilization has

14. ^aAnd when Paradise is brought nigh,⁴⁶⁰⁰

وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُرْزِلَتْ ۖ

15. ^bThen every soul will know what it has produced.⁴⁶⁰¹

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ ۖ

16. Nay! I call to witness the planets that recede,⁴⁶⁰²

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِالْخُنُوسِ ۖ

17. Go ahead *and then* hide.⁴⁶⁰³

الْجَوَارِ الْكُنُوسِ ۖ

^a2:91; 50:32. ^b3:31; 82:6.

achieved will be consumed in the fire caused by shots, shells and bombs. Mankind had a foretaste of this Hell "let loose" in the last two World Wars, and the world now stands in terrible fright of a third war, compared to which the last Two Wars would appear to be mere child's play, and which will reduce to ashes all human achievements.

4600. Commentary:

As in the latter days, evil will abound and man will abandon himself to vice and the worship of Mammon, even a small act of righteousness will make him deserving of great reward and will draw him closer to Heaven.

The verse may also mean that God will reveal Himself through the Reformer of the day and so many signs and miracles will be shown by him that reality will be easy to realize, and Paradise, as it were, will be brought near to man.

4601. Commentary:

The verse means that fulfilment of prophecies mentioned in the foregoing verse will serve as a strong proof that life after death is a certain reality. Or it may signify that God's

special decree will come into force and the punishment of man's evil deeds will take the form of wide-spread calamities and miseries.

4602. Important Words:

الخنس (those that recede) is the plural of خانس which is act. part. from خنس عنه i.e. he drew back; receded; retracted or held back from it or him خنس الكوكب means, the star receded or became hidden or concealed in the day time. خناس means, a sneaking whisperer; one who whispers an evil suggestion and then stealthily retires and conceals himself (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

See next verse.

4603. Important Words:

الكنس (those that hide) is the plural of كنس which is act. part. from كنس which means, it entered into its cave or hiding place among the trees. كنست النجوم means, the stars hid themselves in their places of setting; or continued their course and then departed returning or became stationary in their revolving (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In the preceding verse it was stated

18. And *I call to witness* the night as it passes away,⁴⁶⁰⁴

وَالَّيْلِ إِذَا عَسَسَ ۝١٨

19. ^aAnd the dawn as it begins to breathe,⁴⁶⁰⁵

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ ۝١٩

20. ^bThat this is surely the *revealed* word of a noble Messenger,^{4605A}

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ۝٢٠

21. Possessor of power, established in the presence of the Lord of the Throne,⁴⁶⁰⁶

ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٍ ۝٢١

^a74:35. ^b69:41.

that in the latter days—in the time of the Promised Messiah—Muslims will begin to decline from their position of eminence. This verse gives some of the reasons that will lead to their decline and downfall, viz. that they will either rush forward headlong thoughtlessly for the carrying out of their contemplated programmes; or will give up all creative and constructive efforts in despair.

4604. Important Words:

عَسَسَ (passes away) means, he went round by night to guard the people; he made search by night after suspected persons. عَسَسَ اللَّيْلِ means, the night came on with its darkness; the night departed; the night was dark (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

This and the next verse mean that with the advent of the Promised Messiah, the night of moral decline and degradation of Muslims will begin to depart, giving place to the dawn of a great and glorious future for Islam.

4605. Important Words:

تَنَفَّسَ (begins to breathe) is derived from نَفَسَ which means, he breathed. تَنَفَّسَ الصُّبْحِ means, the morning advanced so that it became noon or it extended so that it became clear, bright, cheerful, etc. (Aqrab).

4605A. Commentary:

The verse signifies that though the prediction that after the decline of Islam had touched its nadir it will again come to its own, may seem to be a far cry, it shall certainly be fulfilled because the prediction is embodied in the revealed Word of God, spoken through the mouth of a noble Messenger.

The words "a noble Messenger" refer to the Holy Prophet and not to Archangel Gabriel as generally misunderstood.

4606. Commentary:

The verse embodies yet another mighty prophecy, viz. that the Holy Prophet will triumph over his enemies.

22. Obeyed there, *and* faithful to *his* trust.⁴⁶⁰⁷

مُطَاعٍ ثُمَّ أَمِينٍ ۖ

23. ^aAnd your companion is not mad. ⁴⁶⁰⁸

وَمَا صَاحِبُكُمْ بِمَجْنُونٍ ۚ

24. And he assuredly saw him on the clear horizon^b.⁴⁶⁰⁹

وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ بِالْأُفُقِ الْمُبِينِ ۚ

25. And he is not niggardly with respect to the unseen.⁴⁶¹⁰

وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٍ ۚ

^a34:47; 52:30. ^b53:8

4607. Important Words:

ثُمَّ means, there; yonder; syn. هناك. It is a noun of indication denoting a place that is remote from the speaker (Lane).

Elsewhere the Quran says with respect to the Holy Prophet: "And We sent not a Messenger but that he should be obeyed by Allah's permission" (4:65). In the verse under comment it is added that he is also أمين i.e. when the Holy Prophet will come to gain great power he will not lose his balance of mind, but will have proper regard for other peoples' rights and will give everyone his due. This word may also refer to the well-known title by which the Holy Prophet was known among his compatriots. All the five attributes—noble Messenger, possessor of power, enjoying a high rank before the Lord of the Throne, the one obeyed, and faithful to his trust in the sight of God, quite fittingly apply to the Holy Prophet.

4608. Commentary:

The verse clearly shows that vv. 20-22 apply to the Holy Prophet and not to Gabriel as wrongly

understood by certain commentators of the Quran.

4609. Commentary:

The pronoun "ه" may mean "it" or "him." In the first place it may signify the fulfilment of the prophecy about the glorious future of Islam. In the second, it may refer to the Holy Prophet himself, meaning that the Holy Prophet saw himself in the distant East in the person of the Promised Messiah.

The words الأفق المبين meaning the side of the East, the verse not only points to a remote future but to the distant East where the foundations for the renaissance of Islam would be laid through the Holy Prophet in his Second Coming in the person of the Promised Messiah.

4610. Important Words:

ضن (niggardly) is derived from ضن. They say ضن به i.e. he was or became niggardly of it. ضنين means, niggardly; tenacious, stingy; or avaricious (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that it is not only the prophecy about the dawn of a

26. "Nor is this the word of Satan, the rejected.

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَيْطَانٍ رَّجِيمٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. Whither, then, are you going?⁴⁶¹¹

فَإَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28. ^bIt is nothing but a Reminder unto all the worlds,⁴⁶¹²

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29. Unto such among you as desire to go straight.

لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30. ^cAnd you desire not *a thing* except that Allah, the Lord of the worlds, desires *it*.⁴⁶¹³

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

^a26:211. ^b12:105; 38:88. ^c18:40; 74:57; 76:31.

glorious future of Islam in a far-off eastern country which the Prophet has made, but God has disclosed to the world many other very weighty secrets of the unknown from the mouth of the Holy Prophet. The fulfilment of the prophecies will prove that their origin is Divine.

4611. Commentary:

The verse drives home to disbelievers the untenability of their position and asks them in forcible terms whether in view of very solid and strong arguments, given in the above verses about the truth of the Holy Prophet's claim as a Messenger of God, is it possible for them, consistently with honesty, reason and common sense, to reject his Message?

4612. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the Quran is a safe guidance for men of all temperaments, dispositions, aptitudes, and of every age, clime and status, if only they are honest seekers after truth.

4613. Commentary:

The verse along with the one preceding it may mean: (1) He alone would be guided to the right path who makes an attempt to find it and conforms his will to the will of God. (2) It is only when God's decree comes into operation and He manifests His will by sending down guidance that men feel an inward urge to discover and walk on the right path.

CHAPTER 82

AL-INFITĀR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introductory Remarks

This *Sūrah* is so similar in style and subject matter to the one preceding it that it forms, as it were, its counterpart, with this difference that it lays special emphasis on the signs concerning Christianity of the present time. It is characteristic of the Quran that, in view of their importance, it takes out certain parts of the text of a *Sūrah* and gives them a distinct name and individuality, in order to draw pointed attention to the subject dealt with in the separated verses and in order also that the separated parts may be easily committed to memory. The *Sūrah*, as mentioned above, deals particularly with the conditions obtaining in the latter days when Christian doctrines and ways of life were to impress very deeply the conduct and concepts of non-Christian peoples, especially the Muslims. All the prophecies mentioned in the *Sūrah* have been literally fulfilled. The *Sūrah* as revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Call about the time of the revelation of the preceding chapter. It takes its name from the word انْفَطَرَتْ in the opening verse.



(AL-INFITĀR)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bWhen the heaven is cleft asunder, ⁴⁶¹⁴

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ ②

3. And when the stars are scattered, ⁴⁶¹⁵

وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انْتَثَرَتْ ③

4. ^cAnd when the oceans are made to flow forth *and are joined together*, ⁴⁶¹⁶

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b73:19. ^c52:7; 81:7.

4614. Commentary:

As mentioned in the Introduction, the *Sūrah* deals particularly with the time when Christianity would be very much in the ascendant, and Christian doctrines of the Trinity and the Sonship of Jesus Christ would reign supreme. To this dominance of Christian beliefs, the Quran has referred in very strong language in the words: "The heavens might well-nigh be rent thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in pieces, because they ascribe a son to the Gracious God" (19:91-92). The verse under comment thus signifies that at that time false doctrines of Christianity would dominate the world, and as a result of it God's wrath would be excited and Divine punishment would overtake the world in various forms. The reference is clearly to the present time.

The verse may also signify that God's righteous servants would feel so grieved at seeing sin and iniquity

spreading all round in the world as a result of false Christian doctrines that their hearts would, as it were, become rent; the word "heavens" referring to the hearts of the righteous believers which in religious phraseology are called God's Throne.

4615. Commentary:

Metaphorically, the verse means that in the latter days men possessing true spiritual knowledge and guidance would disappear or become rare. The difference in the words in this and the corresponding verse of the preceding *Sūrah* is significant. Whereas the verse under comment signifies that wealthy people and skilled craftsmen would yield place to Labour and Communist organisations, the corresponding verse of the preceding *Sūrah* meant that old aristocratic houses would lose their influence and prestige.

4616. Commentary:

The verse signifies that great seas and oceans would be made to flow

5. ^aAnd when the graves are laid open,⁴⁶¹⁷

وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ ۝

6. ^bEvery soul shall *then* know what it has sent forth and what it has kept back.⁴⁶¹⁸

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ ۝

7. O man! what has deceived thee *and emboldened thee* against thy Gracious Lord,⁴⁶¹⁹

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ ۝

^a100:10. ^b3:31; 81:15.

into one another by means of canals; or their mouths would be dug wide open so as to make large ships ply in them. The reference may be to the Panama and Suez canals. The substitution of the word فجرت in the present verse for سحرت in the 7th verse of the preceding *Sūrah* is also worthy of note.

4617. Commentary:

The verse may signify that in the latter days graves will be laid open as has been done in the case of the tombs of the ancient kings of Egypt; or it may mean that towns and monuments submerged and long forgotten would be dug out. These verses (2-5) may also refer to the great spiritual resolution brought about by the Holy Prophet. In this case "the cleaving asunder of the heaven" would signify that the gates of heaven would be thrown open and heavenly signs in support of the Holy Prophet would appear in large numbers. And "the scattering of the stars" would mean that the Companions of the Holy Prophet would spread out in the world and scatter the seeds of the Quranic

Message far and wide. "The flowing forth of the rivers" would signify that the rivers of Quranic knowledge would be made to flow and would fertilize the land that had lain dry and parched for long centuries. And "the laying open of the graves" would mean that through the teachings of Islam the spiritually dead people would receive a new life and, as it were, come out of their graves. Or the verse may mean that the earth would throw out its treasures of mineral wealth.

4618. Commentary:

In this and the next few verses the address is to the protagonists and propagandists of the false Christian doctrines. They will come to realize the enormity and heinousness of their false teaching.

4619. Commentary:

The reference in the verse may be to preachers of the false doctrines of Christianity and may imply a subtle rebuke to them, saying in effect: How could they dare invent such self-contradictory doctrines as those of Atonement and the Sonship of Jesus, describing God as a loving Father and

8. "Who created thee, then perfected thee, then proportioned thee aright?⁴⁶²⁰

الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ۝٨

9. In whatever form He pleased, He fashioned thee.

فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ ۝٩

10. Nay, but you deny the Judgement. ⁴⁶²¹

كَلَّا بَلْ تُكَذِّبُونَ بِالذِّينِ ۝١٠

11. ^bBut there are guardians over you,

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ ۝١١

12. ^cNoble recorders,⁴⁶²²

كَرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ ۝١٢

13. Who know *all* that you do.⁴⁶²³

يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ۝١٣

14. ^dVerily, the virtuous will be in Bliss;

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ۝١٤

15. ^eAnd the wicked will be in Hell;

وَإِنَّ الْفَجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ ۝١٥

^a87:3; 91:8. ^b6:62. ^c43:81; 50:19. ^d45:31; 83:23. ^e83:8.

at the same time accusing Him of condemning an innocent man—"His own so-called son," that he might wash away the sins of corrupt humanity?

4620. Commentary:

The verse contains a refutation of Atonement. It purports to say that man is not born sinful and he does not stand in need of the vicarious sacrifice of anybody for His redemption. Instead of being born sinful, he has been endowed with great natural powers and faculties in order that he may rise to the highest peaks of spiritual eminence. The verse may also signify that God revealed His guidance in every age in the form best suited to man's needs.

4621. Commentary:

Christians are here told that by their false doctrines they, in fact, deny the Last Judgement, that is to say, man's responsibility for his actions and his accountability before God. The doctrine of Atonement and man's sinful birth directly negative man's freedom of action and responsibility.

4622. Commentary:

See 50:18-19.

4623. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that man is born fully free and is responsible for the decisions he takes and for the deeds he does, which are recorded by "noble recorders."

16. ^aThey will burn therein on the Day of Judgement;

يُصَلُّونَهَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿١٦﴾

17. And they will not *be able to* escape therefrom.

وَمَا هُمْ عَنْهَا بِغَائِبِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

18. And what should make thee know what the Day of Judgement is!⁴⁶²⁴

وَمَا أَذْرِكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿١٨﴾

19. Again, what should make thee know what the Day of Judgement is!

ثُمَّ مَا أَذْرِكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿١٩﴾

20. ^bThe day when a soul shall have no power to do aught for another soul! ^cAnd the command on that day will be Allah's *alone*.⁴⁶²⁵

يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِّنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا
وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ ﴿٢٠﴾

^a23:104; 83:17. ^b2:124; 31:34. ^c18:45; 40:17.

4624. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse again signify that man will be punished and rewarded according to his actions and that the vicarious sacrifice of no one will be of any use to him.

4625. Commentary:

The verse constitutes an emphatic repudiation of the doctrine of Atonement. It purports to say that every person shall have to carry his own cross and to answer for his actions. Only God's mercy and grace can help him on the Day of

Reckoning, and not anyone's suffering or sacrifice.

Applied to this life, the verse may be taken to hold a message of solace and good cheer to the followers of Islam. They are consoled and comforted that they should not be discouraged by the temporary glory and ascendancy of Christian doctrines and political power. The day is fast approaching when the kingdom of God would be established on earth and Islam would come into its own after routing false Christian doctrines.

CHAPTER 83

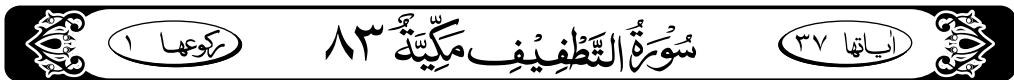
AT-TAṬFĪF

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introductory Remarks

The *Sūrah* opens with a severe condemnation of the use of false measures and weights for the purpose of defrauding others. It takes its title from the word **مطففين** which means "who give short measure." According to scholarly opinion, it was revealed early in the Meccan period. Nöldeke and Muir assign its revelation to about the fourth year of the Call.

The preceding *Sūrah* had ended with a warning to disbelievers that they will have to render account of their deeds and will have to make up their spiritual loss themselves, and that the sacrifice or intercession of no one else would be of any use to them on the Day of Judgement. In that *Sūrah* man's relations with his Creator were discussed, particularly the grave injustice perpetrated by Christians in relation to Divine attributes, in that they have set up a weak human being as God and have invented other untenable doctrines. In the present *Sūrah* stress has been laid on man's dealings with his fellow-beings, with special reference to the cruel exploitation by Christian powers of weaker and less developed nations after depriving them of their liberty of action. The *Sūrah* ends on a note of stern warning to the unjust and dishonest people that they will not be allowed to go unpunished. The Day of Reckoning awaits them in all its frightfulness and severity.



(AT-TAṬFĪF)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bWoe unto those who give short measure;⁴⁶²⁶

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ ②

3. Those who, when they take by measure from other people, take it full;

الَّذِينَ إِذَا كَتَلُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ③

4. ^cBut when they give by measure to others or weigh to them, they give *them* less.

وَإِذَا كَالُوا لَهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوا لَهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ ④

5. Do not such *people* know that they will be raised again⁴⁶²⁷

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ ⑤

6. Unto an awful day,⁴⁶²⁸

لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ⑥

^aSee 1:1. ^b11:85; 26:182-184; 55:9. ^c55:10.

4626. Important Words:

المطففين (those who give short measure) is derived from طفف which means, he made defective and deficient. طفف على عياله means, he was niggardly to his family. طفف المكيال والميزان means, he gave short measure and short weight. طفيف means, little in quantity; also base, low, vile, mean; paltry or contemptible (Lane).

Commentary:

The word المطففين has been used here in a general sense. Stress is laid on honesty, justice and equity in all sorts of dealings with men. See Introduction to the *Sūrah*.

4627. Commentary:

In the heyday of their power and

prosperity nations, like individuals, are apt to forget the most sure and certain truth writ large on the face of history that sin and injustice never go unpunished. There is a Day of Reckoning in the afterlife, when men shall have to render account of their actions to their Lord and Master, but a day of reckoning comes upon a people in this very life, when their evil doings exceed legitimate bounds and they meet their nemesis.

4628. Commentary:

"An awful day", besides referring to the Last Day of Judgement, signifies the day of reckoning when a whole people are punished for their sins of omission and commission. Their power and glory depart and they sink into

7. The day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds?

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

8. "Nay! the record of the wicked is in Sijjīn. **4629**

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْفُجَّارِ لَفِي سِجِّينٍ ۝

9. And what should make thee know what Sijjīn is? **4629A**

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا سِجِّينٌ ۝

10. *It is a Book written comprehensively.* **4630**

كِتَابٌ مَّرْقُومٌ ۝

^a45:29; 69:26.

the depths of misery and degradation.

The history of mankind is the story of the rise of different peoples at different times to the dizzy heights of grandeur and prosperity and of their day of reckoning when they sink into oblivion.

4629. Important Words:

سجین (*Sijjīn*) is wrongly considered by some commentators of the Quran as a non-Arabic word. According to such eminent authorities as Farrā', Zajjāj. Abū 'Ubaidah and Mubarrad, it is an Arabic word derived from the root سجن (*sajana*). Lisān considers it as equivalent to سجن (*sijn*) meaning, a prison. سجین is a register or book in which the record of evil deeds of the wicked is said to be kept in the next world. The word also means, anything hard, vehement and severe; continuous, lasting or everlasting (Lane & Aqrab).

4629A. Commentary:

It is worthy of note that two expressions of almost identical import have been used in the Quran, viz. ما أدرك and ما يدريك, both meaning,

"what should make thee know." The former expression is used in answer to an inquiry in the past tense, thus making the answer definite and certain. The latter expression is invariably followed by the word لعل which connotes that the answer is vague and indefinite.

4630. Important Words:

كتاب means, a book; a record or register; a revealed Scripture; Divine decree; judgement or sentence. etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In view of different significations of سجین and كتاب the verse under comment, along with v. 8, would signify that the register in which the record of the evil deeds of the wicked are kept is known by the name سجین i.e. the name of the book would show that their punishment would be severe and lasting. Or the verse may mean that the wicked will be kept in a place of disgrace and ignominy and this is an irrevocable decision. Or سجین and علیین may be the names of two portions of the Quran, the former dealing with

11. Woe, on that day, unto those who reject,

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١١﴾

12. Who deny the Day of Judgement.

الَّذِينَ يَكْذِبُونَ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿١٢﴾

13. And none denies it save every sinful transgressor,

وَمَا يَكْذِبُ بِهِ إِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿١٣﴾

14. ^aWho, when Our Signs are recited unto him, says: 'Fables of the ancients!'

إِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

15. Nay, but that which they have earned has rusted their hearts. **4631**

كَأَلْبَلٍ رَّانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16. ^bNay, they will surely be debarred from *seeing* their Lord on that day. **4632**

كَأَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمْ حُجُّوا ﴿١٦﴾

^a8:32; 16:25; 68:16. ^b3:78.

the wicked rejecters of the Divine Message and with the punishments to be meted out to them, and the latter with the righteous servants of God and the rewards to be bestowed upon them. Thus the meaning of the verse would be that the verdicts recorded in these two portions cannot be recalled and so cannot be altered or changed.

4631. Important Words:

بران (has rusted). بران الثوب means, the garment was or became rusty or covered with rust, dust, or filth. بران هواه means, his evil desire covered or overcame his heart. برين means, rust that overspreads the sword; dirt, filth or soil (Lane & Aqrab).

4632. Commentary:

The sight of God is granted to a

believer in two stages. The first stage is that of belief, when the believer acquires a firm faith in the Divine attributes. This is the initial stage. The second or the higher stage consists in his being granted realization of the Divine Being. This stage is achieved after one has witnessed the manifestation of God's powers and attributes in the form of great signs and miracles. The sinners, on account of their rusted hearts, will remain deprived of the realization of the Divine Being on the Day of Judgement. They will not see the face of God. The *Sūrah* particularly deals with the fraudulent behaviour of the Christian powers of the west.

The use of the particle لا (by no means) three times after referring to

17. ^aThen, verily, they will burn in Hell,

ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا الْجَحِيمِ ۖ

18. ^bThen it will be said to them, ‘This is what you used to reject.’

ثُمَّ يُقَالُ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ
تُكَذِّبُونَ ۖ

19. Nay! but the record of the virtuous is surely in ‘Illiyīn. ⁴⁶³³

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْبَرَارِ لَفِي عِلِّيِّينَ ۖ

20. And what should make thee know what ‘Illiyūn is?

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا عِلِّيُّونَ ۖ

21. ^cIt is a Book written comprehensively.

كِتَابٌ مَرْقُومٌ ۖ

22. The chosen ones of God will witness it.

يَشْهَدُهُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۖ

23. ^dSurely, the virtuous will be in Bliss, ⁴⁶³⁴

إِنَّ الْبَرَارِ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ۖ

^a23:104; 82:16. ^b52:15. ^c45:30; 69:20. ^d45:31; 82:14.

the wicked deeds of disbelievers seems to suggest that the Christian powers of the west will receive three severe shocks, may be in the form of three world wars, two of which have already taken place.

4633. Important Words:

عِلِّيِّين is considered by some to have been derived from علا which means, it was or became high, and thus may mean, the most exalted ranks which the righteous will enjoy. The word may also mean liberty or freedom which signifies that the righteous will be free to go anywhere in Paradise. The word may also stand for those parts of the Quran which contain prophecies about the great progress and prosperity of believers.

According to Ibn ‘Abbās the word means Paradise (Ibn Kathīr), while Imām Rāghib considers it to be the name of the dwellers thereof.

Commentary:

The word سَجِينَ being singular and عِلِّيِّين plural it appears that the punishment of evildoers will be static, i.e. stationary in one place, but the spiritual progress of the righteous will continue without interruption, assuming different forms. They will go from one rank to another.

4634. Commentary:

The verse means that it is an unalterable Divine decree that the righteous will make unending progress.

24. ^aSeated on couches, gazing.⁴⁶³⁵

25. Thou will find in their faces the freshness of Bliss.^b

26. They will be given to drink of a pure beverage, sealed.⁴⁶³⁶

27. The sealing of it will be *with* musk—for this let the aspirants aspire—

28. And it will be tempered with *the water of Tasnīm*,⁴⁶³⁷

29. A spring of which the chosen ones will drink.⁴⁶³⁸

30. ^cThose who were guilty used to laugh at those who believed;⁴⁶³⁹

عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٤٧﴾

يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْمُومٍ ﴿٤٨﴾

خِتَمُهُ مِسْكٌ ۖ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَمِزَاجُهُ مِنْ تَسْنِيمٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

^a15:48; 18:32; 36:57; 76:14. ^b75:23; 76:12. ^c23:111.

4635. Commentary:

Sinners will not be able to see the face of God, but the righteous believers will be granted the favour of having a view of the Divine Being.

4636. Important Words:

رحيق (pure beverage) means, the oldest, choicest, sweetest, most excellent of wine; wine easy to swallow; honey; a sort of perfume. مسك means, unadulterated musk (Lane).

4637. Important Words:

تسنيم (tasnīm) is inf. noun from سَمَّ سَمًّا i.e. he raised the thing. سَمَّ فلان الاء means, such a one filled the vessel. تسنيم is taken to be a fountain in Paradise;

water coming from above: the knowledge of God. Figuratively, it means, the Word of God.

Commentary:

If رحيق (pure beverage) be taken as referring to the Quran, تسنيم are revelations that are sent down to the Chosen Ones of God—the righteous followers of the Holy Prophet.

4638. Commentary:

The Chosen Ones of God, from among the Holy Prophet's followers, will be made to drink deep at the fountain of Divine realization that God will cause to flow.

4639. Commentary:

The verse means that disbelievers used to laugh in their sleeves at the

31. And when they passed by them, they winked at one another.⁴⁶⁴⁰

وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

32. "And when they returned to their families they returned exulting;⁴⁶⁴¹

وَإِذَا انْقَلَبُوا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ انْقَلَبُوا فَكِهِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33. And when they saw them they said, 'These indeed are the lost ones!'

وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّ هَٰؤُلَاءِ لَضَالُّونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34. But they were not sent as keepers over them.

وَمَا أُرْسِلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ حَٰفِظِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35. This day, therefore, it is the believers who will laugh at the disbelievers^b,⁴⁶⁴²

فَإِنَّ يَوْمَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36. Seated on couches, gazing.⁴⁶⁴³

عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ لَا يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

^a84:14. ^b2:213.

frequent prophecies about the rapid spread and triumph of Islam, made at a time when it was fighting a seemingly losing battle for its existence.

4640. Important Words:

يتغامزون (they winked at one another in mockery) is derived from غمز. They say غمزه بالعين i.e. he made a sign to him with the eye. تغامزوا means, they made signs to one another with their eyes, eyebrows, hands, indicating something blameable and faulty (Lane).

4641. Commentary:

The verses (31-33) refer to the jibes, jests, and insults to which the

Muslims were subjected at Mecca; in fact, to the mockeries and railleries hurled at believers in the time of every Prophet of God and Divine Reformer.

4642. Commentary:

The verse says that disbelievers will have tables turned on them, and that they will be made to realize, to their shame and chagrin, that it were they and not the believers who deserved to be laughed at for rejecting the Divine Message. "This day" means the day of the triumph of truth over untruth.

4643. Important Words:

ينظرون (viewing) نظر means, he looked. Contemplated, judged,

CHAPTER 84

AL-INSHIQĀQ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

Like the preceding three chapters, the present *Sūrah* was revealed early at Mecca. The four *Sūrahs* very much resemble in style, composition and subject matter. Nöldeke and Muir agree with Muslim scholars about the early date of the revelation of this *Sūrah*—near about the time of revelation of the *Sūrahs* that immediately precede it. In fact, the present *Sūrah* completes the chain of which the preceding three *Sūrahs* also form the component part.

Towards the end of the last *Sūrah*, disbelievers were warned in emphatic terms that their power would break and their glory depart. In the present *Sūrah* it is stated that belief will take the place of disbelief and from the ruins of the old decadent and decrepit order a new, vigorous and vibrant order would emerge. The *Sūrah* continues the theme of *Sūrah* Infiṭār (Chap. 82), the intervening *Sūrah* Taṭfīf (Chap. 83) being merely its extension. *Sūrah* Infiṭār had opened with the subject of the cleaving asunder of the heaven; and the present *Sūrah* begins with an analogous expression, with this difference that whereas in *Sūrah* Infiṭār "cleaving asunder of the heaven" was connected with the false doctrines of Christianity which would excite God's wrath, in the present *Sūrah* by "the bursting asunder of the heaven" is meant the descent of Divine revelation and the emergence and spread of spiritual sciences. Thus the present *Sūrah*, with its three predecessors, forms a chain of chapters which deal with the subject of the regeneration and renaissance of Islam in the latter days, and with the sins and iniquities of the previous period. The present *Sūrah* specifically deals with the renaissance of Islam while the preceding *Sūrahs* deal with corruption and immorality.



(AL-INSHIQĀQ)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the heaven bursts as-under^b, **4643A**

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انشَقَّتْ ②

3. And gives ear to her Lord^c— and *this* is incumbent upon her—**4644**

وَأَذْنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ③

4. And when the earth is spread out^d, **4645**

وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b55:38; 69:17. ^c41:12. ^d50:45.

4643A. Commentary:

The verse refers to the time when the gates of heaven will open and heavenly signs in support of Islam will appear in large numbers and highly placed persons will begin to give serious thought to the revealed guidance. For a detailed note on this spiritual phenomenon of the bursting forth or opening out of the heaven see 21:31.

4644. Important Words:

أَذْنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا (hearkens to her Lord). They say أَذْنُ إِلَهِهِ وَ لَهُ i.e. he listened to him, being pleased with him (Lane). The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: مَا أَذْنُ اللَّهِ لَشَيْءٍ مَا أَذْنُ لِلنَّبِيِّ يَتَغْنَى بِالْقُرْآنِ i.e. God is not so fond of listening to anything as when the Prophet recites the Quran (Bukhārī, chapter *Faḍā'ilul Qur'ān*).

حُقَّتْ (this is incumbent upon her). حَقٌّ means, it was or became necessary or unavoidable; it was or became binding, obligatory, incumbent or

due. حَقٌّ لَكَ أَنْ تَفْعَلَ كَذَا i.e. it is incumbent, obligatory, necessary, etc. for thee that thou shouldst do this (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse taken with its predecessor purports to say that a new Adam will be born and the angels of the heaven will take their stand on his side, ready to help him in the furtherance and propagation of his divine mission (69:18), because that is mainly the object of their creation. The verse further implies that a new order will come into being and great heavenly signs will appear and the Word of God will descend in quick succession, disclosing to the God-fearing heavenly mysteries and spiritual sciences.

4645. Important Word:

مُدَّتْ (is spread out). مَدَّ اللَّهُ الْأَرْضَ means, God expanded or stretched out and made level the earth. مَدَّ فِي عَمْرِهِ means, he had his life lengthened. أَمَدٌ لَهُ فِي الْأَجَلِ

5. And casts out *all* that is in her, and *appears* to become empty;⁴⁶⁴⁶

وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ ۝

6. And gives ear to her Lord—and *this* is incumbent upon her—

وَأَذْنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ۝

7. Verily, thou, O man, art toiling on towards thy Lord, a hard toiling; then thou wilt meet Him^a.⁴⁶⁴⁷

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدًّا فَامْلِكْ ۝

8. Then as for him who is given his Record in his right hand^b,⁴⁶⁴⁸

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ ۝

^a2:224; 11:30; 18:111; 29:6. ^b17:72; 56:28; 69:20.

means, he deferred or postponed for him the period of duration. مد القوم means, he aided or succoured the people or became an auxiliary to them. مد الارض means, he put manure in the land (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse signifies that the earth will get a new lease of life and the destruction which it had deserved on account of men's sins will be deferred; and it will receive fresh manure, i.e. new means will be provided for the spiritual progress of its dwellers. The verse may also signify that some planets which appear to pertain to the heaven will be discovered to form a part of the earth and men will try to reach them by means of rockets, etc.

4646. Commentary:

The verse may mean:

(a) The earth will throw out its hidden treasures so abundantly that it would appear as if it was going to

empty itself out.

(b) Spiritual sciences will make great progress.

(c) The science of archaeology will specially develop and expand.

(d) The earth will become cleansed of sin and iniquity on account of great miracles and signs that it will witness and people will listen to the Divine Message.

4647. Important Words:

كادح (toiling hard) is act. part. from كدح which means, he laboured hard and actively; he toiled or laboured hard till he wearied himself (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Man has to work hard to attain to God. To suffer physical, mental and monetary sacrifice in order to achieve this goal.

4648. Commentary:

"The right hand" being a metaphor for power and strength, the verse

9. He will surely have an easy reckoning,

فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا ۝٩

10. And he will return to his family, rejoicing.

وَيَقْلِبُ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا ۝١٠

11. But as for him who will have his Record given to him behind his back^a, **4649**

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ ۝١١

12. He will soon call for destruction, **4650**

فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا ثُبُورًا ۝١٢

13. And he will burn in a blazing Fire.

وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا ۝١٣

14. Verily, *before this* he lived joyfully among his people.^b

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا ۝١٤

15. He indeed thought that he would never return to God^c. **4651**

إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ يَحُورَ ۝١٥

عند المتأخرين

^a56:42; 69:26. ^b83:32. ^c18:36.

means that those fortunate people who had acted upon the teachings of the Quran with patience and perseverance will be given their record in their right hand, signifying that they had lived up to its commandments to the best of their ability.

4649. Commentary:

Those "who had thrown the Book of God behind their backs, i.e. those who had treated the Quran as a discarded thing" (25:31), will be given their record behind their backs. This will constitute a sign that they had not acted upon its teaching.

4650. Important Words:

ثُبُور (destruction) is derived from ثَبَر which means, he perished; he suffered loss; he erred; he became lost. ثَبُور means, loss, perdition;

complete destruction, woe, etc. (Lane). See also 25:15.

Commentary:

When a man is in extreme distress, he desires death might end his life. The verse under comment describes this state of mind of the disbelievers. Face to face with Divine punishment in the form of blazing fire, the disbelievers will wish death to come upon them and "death will come to them from every direction but they will not die" (14:18).

4651. Important Words:

يَحُور (would return) is formed from حَار which means, he returned from a good state to a bad state. They say نَعُوْزُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الْحَوْرِ بعد الكَوْرِ i.e. we seek protection with God that we should return to a bad state after a good state. حَار also means, it decreased or became

16. Yea! surely, his Lord was *ever* watchful of him.

بَلَىٰ إِنَّ رَبَّهُ كَانَ بِهِ بَصِيرًا ۝

17. But nay! I call to witness the glow of sunset, **4651A**

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ ۝

18. And the night and *all* that it envelops, **4651B**

وَاللَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ ۝

19. And the moon when it becomes full, **4652**

وَالْقَمَرَ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ ۝

20. That you shall assuredly pass on from one stage to another. **4653**

لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَن طَبَقٍ ۝

defective or deficient; he perished or died; he became changed from one state or condition to another; he was or became perplexed and confounded and was unable to see his right course. The Arabs say *حار و بار* i.e. he was reduced to or became in a defective and bad state (Lane & Aqrab).

4651A. Commentary:

See note on v. 19.

4651B. Commentary:

See note on v. 19.

4652. Important Words:

اتسق (becomes full) is derived from *وسق الشيء*. They say *وسق الامر* i.e. he gathered and heaped up the thing. *اتسق الامر* means, the affair became in good order, complete, perfect, whole. *اتسق القمر* means, the moon became full; its light became complete and it became *بدر* (moon of the 14th night); the moon became full and its light became complete, from the 13th to the 16th night (Lane, Farrā').

Commentary:

In this verse reference is made to

the moon of the 14th night which, shining in all its brightness, would dispel the spiritual darkness that had enshrouded the entire face of the earth. This moon was the Promised Messiah who was born in the 13th century of Hijrah and who announced his claim in the 14th century, the period of his ministry extending to the end of the 16th century, A. H. (Taryāqul-Qulūb). Thus these verses (17-19) contained a prophecy about the temporary decline of Muslims, and their renaissance through the Promised Messiah who was to reflect in his person fully and faithfully the glorious light of the sun, i.e. the Holy Prophet.

4653. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the renaissance of Islam will take place through the indefatigable missionary efforts of the Promised Messiah and his devoted followers, gradually and in stages. Or the verse may mean that Muslims will pass through all the conditions referred to in the preceding verses—periods of light

21. So what is the matter with them that they believe not^a, **4654**

22. And when the Quran is recited unto them, they do not bow *in submission*; **4655**

23. On the contrary, those who disbelieve reject *it*.^b

24. And Allah knows best what they keep hidden *in their hearts*. **4656**

25. ^cSo give them tidings of a painful punishment.

26. ^dBut *as to* those who believe and do good works, theirs is an unending reward.

فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْآنُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوعُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

^a43:89. ^b85:20. ^c9:34. ^d11:12; 41:9; 95:7.

and darkness.

4654. Commentary:

What is the matter with the disbelievers (the verse asks) that after having witnessed the fulfilment of the first two parts of the prophecy, they have despaired of the fulfilment of the third part? They have seen the ruddy glow of the sunset of Islam, followed by the darkness of spiritual night for thirteen hundred years after the Holy Prophet, and yet they do not believe that the moon of the 14th night will appear to dispel darkness.

4655. Commentary:

The allusion in the verse may be to the renaissance of Islam in the Latter Days and the bringing back of faith from the Pleiades by a man of Persian descent—the Promised Messiah, which, as it were, will amount to the

Quran being revealed again. Instead of being grateful to God for this great boon, the disbelievers will oppose him and reject the Divine Message.

4656. Important Words:

يُوعُونَ (keep hidden in their hearts) is derived from وعى which means, he gathered and preserved, grasped together and put in a receptacle. أوعى الكلام means, he preserved in his memory, remembered and gathered the talk (Aqrah).

Commentary:

The verse warns disbelievers that God knows well the animosity and malice they harbour in their hearts against God's Messenger; He also knows the secret plots they hatch to bring to nought his mission and his efforts to promote the cause of Truth.

CHAPTER 85

AL-BURŪJ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introductory Remarks

This *Sūrah* was revealed at Mecca in the first few years of the Call. It takes its title from the word *Burūj* in the first verse. The connection of this *Sūrah* with its predecessor—*Sūrah* Inshiqāq—is indicated by the fact that in the latter *Sūrah* the moon of the 13th night was invoked as a witness, and in the present *Sūrah* "mansions of stars and the Promised Day" have been invoked to serve the same purpose. The *Burūj* or mansions of stars may represent the twelve Divine Reformers (*Mujaddids*), each of whom was raised at the beginning of a century of Hijrah, and the Promised Day stands for the 14th Century of Hijrah when the Muslims stood in great need of a Divine Reformer, their fortunes having sunk to the lowest ebb, and thus, befittingly, the greatest of these Reformers—the Promised Messiah—was raised to restore to them their spiritual glory. This *Sūrah* presents the subject matter of the preceding *Sūrah* in a different form and points to the severe persecution to which the followers of the Promised Messiah would be subjected, ending appropriately on the note that because in the time of the Promised Messiah the integrity of the Quran as God's revealed Word would be assailed from all quarters, particularly by Christian writers, the Promised Messiah would devote all his energies and his great God-given gifts to rebut these attacks and to prove the infallibility and inviolability of the Quran.



(AL-BURŪJ)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the heaven having mansions *of stars*^b,⁴⁶⁵⁷

وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْبُرُوجِ ②

3. And *by* the Promised Day,⁴⁶⁵⁸

وَالْيَوْمِ الْمَوْعُودِ ③

4. And *by* the Witness and by him about Whom witness is borne,⁴⁶⁵⁹

وَشَهِيدٍ وَشَهِودٍ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b15:17; 25:62.

4657. Important Words:

البروج (mansions of stars) is the plural of برج (*burj*) which is substantive noun from برج (*baraja*) which means, it was or became apparent, manifest or conspicuous or it was or became high or elevated. برج means, a tower; a sign of the Zodiac. بروج means, mansions (i.e. courses or stages) of the moon or the stars; or asterisms or constellations. See also 15:17 (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that just as there are twelve mansions of stars in the physical heaven, similarly there will be twelve Divine Reformers or *Mujaddids* or twelve mansions in the spiritual firmament of Islam who will keep its light burning after the sun had set, i.e. after the first three best centuries of Islam will have passed resulting in the spread of spiritual darkness over the whole world. These Reformers will bear witness to the truth of Islam, the Quran and that of

the Holy Prophet.

4658. Commentary:

"The Promised Day" here signifies the day when the Promised Messiah will be raised to bring about the renaissance of Islam. There have been many such days in the history of Islam which could be called the "Promised Day," namely, the day of the Battle of Badr, the day when the Battle of Ditch came to a glorious end, and the day of the Fall of Mecca. But the Promised Day *par excellence* was the time of the Second Coming of the Holy Prophet in the person of the Promised Messiah in the 14th Century A.H. when Islam was to receive a new life and to prevail over all other religions.

The verse may also signify the day when the righteous will enjoy the ecstasy of meeting with their Lord.

4659. Commentary:

Every Prophet or Divine Reformer is شاهد i.e. bearer of witness, because

5. Cursed be the fellows of the trench—⁴⁶⁶⁰

قَتَلَ أَصْحَابُ الْأُخْدُودِ ۝

6. The fire *fed* with fuel—

النَّارِ ذَاتِ الْوُقُودِ ۝

7. As they sat by it,⁴⁶⁶¹

إِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودٌ ۝

he is a living witness to the existence of God, and he is also مشهور (about whom witness is borne) because God bears witness to his truth by showing signs and miracles at his hands, and by creating conditions and circumstances which establish the truth of his Message and mission. But here, as the text shows, the شاهد (bearer of witness) is the Promised Messiah and (about whom witness is borne) is the Holy Prophet, and the verse signifies that the Promised Messiah will bear witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet by his speeches, discourses and writings, and by the signs that God will show at his hands. The Promised Messiah will also bear witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet in the sense that in his person the prophecy of the Holy Prophet about the appearance of the Messiah and Mahdi in the 14th century A.H. will be fulfilled. The Promised Messiah will also be مشهور in the sense that the ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet will bear witness to his truth. Thus the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah will both be شاهد (bearer of witness) and مشهور (about whom witness is borne).

4660. Commentary:

By some commentators of the Quran the verse is taken to refer to the burning to death of some

Christians by the Jewish King, Dhū Nuwās of Yemen; by some others to the casting into a burning furnace of some Israelite leaders by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Dan. 3:19-22). The verse may also apply to those enemies of truth, who in the time of every Divine Reformer bitterly oppose and persecute believers. But as the context shows, the verse applies particularly to the enemies of the Promised Messiah and the persecutors and tormentors of his righteous followers. The word "trench" may possess a prophetic reference to the trenches of modern warfare.

It is not intended there to refer to any past incident of doubtful authenticity. Nowhere in the Quran has God sworn by past incidents. In v. 3. God swears by the "Promised Day." In the present and the next few verses it is hinted that the followers of the Promised Messiah will have to render great sacrifices to usher in that Great Day.

4661. Commentary:

These verses (vv. 5-8) show that all the forces of darkness will combine to oppose and persecute the Promised Messiah and his righteous followers, and that the persecution will be severe and continuous. In fact, in these verses a description is given of

8. And they were witnesses of what they did to the believers.⁴⁶⁶²

وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شُهُودٌ ۖ

9. ^aAnd they hated them not but *only* because they believed in Allah, the Almighty, the Praiseworthy,⁴⁶⁶³

وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَن يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ۝

10. To Whom belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth;^b and Allah is Witness over all things.⁴⁶⁶⁴

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ۖ

11. Those who persecute the believing men and the believing women and then repent not, for them is surely the punishment of Hell, and for them is the punishment of burning.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ الْحَرِيقِ ۖ

^a5:60; 7:127. ^b14:3.

those enemies of truth who kindle the fire of persecution against righteous believers in all ages and constantly keep it ablaze. Their end is predicted in v. 11.

4662. Commentary:

The enemies of truth know in their heart of hearts that their opposition is cruel and unjustified and that the victims of their tyranny are innocent.

4663. Commentary:

The verse is full of pathos. The only fault of the believers is that they believe in One, Merciful and Almighty God. Is belief in God really such a heinous crime that its holders should be subjected to cruel persecution? These verses may also

refer to the persecution of the early Muslims at Mecca. They had done nothing to excite the enmity of their compatriots except that they had given up worshipping idols of wood and stone and instead had believed in God, the Maker of the heavens and earth.

4664. Commentary:

The verse at once holds a message of comfort for the believers and a severe warning to their persecutors. Let the disbelievers, it says, vent their spleen against God's holy men and persecute them to their heart's content. God is witness to all their inhumanities and barbarities, and the time is fast approaching when they will be punished for their evil deeds

12. "But those who believe and do good works, for them are Gardens through which streams flow. That is the great triumph.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ
جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ ۝١٢

13. Surely, the grip of thy Lord is severe.^b

إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ ۝١٣

14. 'He it is Who originates and reproduces;⁴⁶⁶⁵

إِنَّهُ هُوَ يُبْدِي وَيُعِيدُ ۝١٤

15. And He is the Most Forgiving, the Loving;

وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الْودُودُ ۝١٥

16. The Lord of the Throne, the Lord of honour;⁴⁶⁶⁶

ذَوَالْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ ۝١٦

17. ^dDoer of whatever He wills.

فَعَالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ ۝١٧

18. ^eHas *not* the story of the hosts come to thee?

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْجُنُودِ ۝١٨

19. Of Pharaoh and Thamūd?⁴⁶⁶⁷

فِرْعَوْنَ وَثَمُودَ ۝١٩

^a11:24; 31:9; 41:9; 98:8-9. ^b11:103; 22:3. ^c29:20; 30:12. ^d2:254; 22:15. ^e10:91; 28:40-41; 51:41.

and the kingdom of the earth will be given over to the persecuted believers.

4665. Commentary:

The verse means that God will punish the cruel and tyrannical persecutors of believers, in this world and in the life to come.

4666. Commentary:

The word عرش (Throne) signifying regal might, power and sovereignty (Lane), the verse means that God has the power to punish evildoers and to confer the kingdom of the earth on His righteous servants. He can do

what He likes.

4667. Commentary:

The believers are again comforted by this verse and the disbelievers warned. Both of them are told that not only will the followers of the Holy Prophet or, for that matter, the followers of the Promised Messiah, be subjected to persecution, but during the ages the votaries of Satan have harried and harassed men of God and in the long run were themselves destroyed. The cases of Pharaoh's hosts and of the tribe of Thamūd are cited as instances of Divine retribution. These two peoples

20. ^aNay, but those who disbelieve *persist* in rejecting *the truth*.

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي تَكْذِيبٍ ۝٢٠

21. And Allah encompasses *them from before them and from behind them*.

وَاللَّهُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ مُحِيطٌ ۝٢١

22. ^bNay, but it is a glorious Quran,⁴⁶⁶⁸

بَلْ هُوَ قُرْآنٌ مَجِيدٌ ۝٢٢

23. ^cIn a well-guarded tablet.⁴⁶⁶⁹

فِي لَوْحٍ مَحْفُوظٍ ۝٢٣

^a84:23. ^b50:2; 56:78. ^c41:43; 56:79.

of antiquity possessed great power and ruled over vast dominions. For the might, majesty and material resources of Pharaoh and the tribe of Thamūd see 43:52-55 and 11:62.

4668. Commentary:

The verse challenges disbelievers to do their worst to discredit the Quran. The Quran however, will continue to

be read and held in high esteem all over the world.

4669. Commentary:

The verse constitutes a challenging prophecy about the Quran being guarded against every kind of interference and distortion. See also 15:10.

CHAPTER 86

AṬ-ṬĀRIQ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

The *Sūrah* derives its title from the word *Aṭ-Ṭāriq* in its opening verse. The consensus of Muslim scholarly opinion assigns the *Sūrah* to the early period of the Holy Prophet's ministry. Nöldeke and Muir, among European scholars, agree with this view.

The *Sūrah* is the last of the chain of chapters which began with *Sūrah Infiṭār*. In all these *Sūrahs*, the opening verse, in one form or another, furnishes an argument in support of the claim of the Promised Messiah. The intervening *Sūrah Taṭfīf*, which has a different opening, forms, in fact, a part of *Sūrah Infiṭār*. The present *Sūrah* continues and completes the topics which were dealt with in *Sūrah Infiṭār* and in the chapters that follow it and serves as a sort of *برزخ* between the *Sūrah* that precede and those that follow that *Sūrah*. From this *Sūrah*, however, begins a new subject.



(AT-TĀRIQ)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the heaven and the Morning Star—4670

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ ②

3. And what should make thee know what the Morning Star is?4671

وَمَا آدْرُكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ ③

4. *It is* the Star of piercing brightness—4672

النَّجْمِ الثَّاقِبِ ④

^aSee 1:1.

4670. Important Words:

الطارق (Morning Star) is derived from طرّق. They say طرّق الباب i.e. he knocked at the door. طرّق أهله ليلاً means, he came to his family by night. The Arabs say, طرّقه الزمان بنوائيه i.e. the time visited him with its calamities like one knocking at the door in the night. طارِق means, a comer by night, because he has generally to knock; the star that appears in the night; the morning star because it comes in the end of night (Lane, Aqrab & Qādir). The word also means, a chief or great man, as the expression used by Hind on the day of Uḥud shows, viz. نحن بنات طارق means, we are the daughters of great men; and we walk upon pillows (Tārīkhul-Kāmil, vol. 2. and "The Life of Mahomet" by Muir).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse may be to the Promised Messiah whose advent like the morning star was to herald the dawn of the triumph and

spread of Islam, after the night of spiritual darkness had passed. According to some commentators, however, the verse refers to the Holy Prophet who appeared when the night of spiritual darkness had spread over the entire world, it being pitch dark in Arabia, the land where he made his appearance.

4671. Commentary:

The expression ما ادراك ما which occurs in several places in the Quran is used to impart a particular sense to the word or expression used after it. The word الطارق having several meanings may therefore be taken in one particular sense here, viz. النجم الثاقب i.e. the star of piercing brightness in the next verse.

4672. Important Words:

الثاقب (of piercing brightness) is act. part. from ثقب which means, he bored or pierced a thing. ثقب الكوكب means, the star shone brightly as though it pierced through the darkness,

5. That there is no soul but has a guardian over it.⁴⁶⁷³

إِنْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ ۝

6. So let man consider from what he is created.

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ ۝

7. "He is created from a gushing fluid,⁴⁶⁷⁴

خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّاءٍ دَافِقٍ ۝

8. Which issues forth from between the loins and the breastbones.^{4674A}

يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ

وَالثَّرَائِبِ ۝

9. ^bSurely, He has the power to bring him back *to life*

إِنَّهُ عَلَى رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ ۝

10. ^cOn the day when secrets shall be disclosed.⁴⁶⁷⁵

يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَائِرُ ۝

^a24:46; 25:55. ^b17:100; 36:82; 46:34. ^c10:31.

dispelling it. النجم الثاقب الرأى means, a man of sound and penetrating judgement. حسب ثاقب means, a famous, exalted lineage (Lane & Aqrab).

4673. Commentary:

"Soul" signifying the souls or persons of the class of النجم الثاقب i.e. the bright stars that dispel spiritual darkness, the verse means that God will guard and protect the Promised Messiah, the الطارق (the Morning Star) or النجم الثاقب (the Star of Piercing Brightness) of Islam.

The verse has also been taken to mean that God has appointed a guardian over every person who records his good or bad deeds. For this meaning of the verse see 50:19.

4674. Commentary:

The fact that man has been created from a fluid which gushes forth may signify that he has been endowed with great natural faculties to make

rapid progress, but he is also likely to sink to the lowest depths of degradation, if he does not make use of those God-gifted powers. Thus the verse means that man's spiritual development is subject to alternate periods of progression and retrogression, like the seminal fluid that gushes forth and falls.

4674A. Commentary:

It is characteristic of the Quranic style that it substitutes mild or vague words or expressions for harsh and blunt ones. "From between the loins and the breastbones," is one of such euphemisms used by the Quran. Or the verse may mean that man is born of the water that comes out of the loins of his father and is fed by the breast of his mother.

4675. Commentary:

The verse means that all the evil designs of the enemies of the

11. Then he will have no strength and no helper.

فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَلَا نَاصِرٍ ۝١١

12. By the cloud which gives rain repeatedly, **4676**

وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ ۝١٢

13. And by the earth which opens out *with herbage*, **4677**

وَالْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ ۝١٣

14. Surely, it is a decisive word. **4678**

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ ۝١٤

15. Surely, it is not a vain talk. **4679**

وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَزْلِ ۝١٥

Promised Messiah will be brought to light and they will suffer the consequences of their evil deeds. It may also mean that man will be called to account on the Day of Reckoning for the actions he had done in this life, when all secrets will become unmasked and all his actions, motives and thoughts will come to light, nothing will remain hidden, so much so that even his hands, feet and, tongue will bear witness against him (24:25).

4676. Important Words:

ذات الرجع (which gives water repeatedly) is derived from رَجَعَ meaning, he returned. رَجْعٌ (*raj'un*) means, rain; hail, because it gives back the water that it takes; rain that returns; the place that retains water; a pool of water left by torrent; a place in which the torrent has returned; water in general; benefit; a good turn (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

See next verse.

4677. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse

signify that rain on which depends very largely the greenness and vegetation of the earth comes down from heaven in times of need. If it ceases for a time, the water in upper strata of the earth gradually dries up. Thus there exists a connection between heavenly and earthly water. As with the cessation of heavenly water, earthly water begins gradually to dry up, so does human reason lose its purity and strength without heavenly revelation.

4678. Commentary:

See next verse.

4679. Commentary:

In vv. 12-13, the Quran is represented as life-giving rain whereby those who believe in it and act upon its teaching are purified and fostered in the ways of righteousness. This constitutes a strong proof, not a "joke," that the Quran is God's own revealed Word which distinguishes and discriminates between truth and falsehood; (هزل meaning, a joke, jest or obscene talk or weak discourse) (Aqrab).

16. And they plan a plan,^a

إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ۖ ﴿١٦﴾

17. And I *also* plan a plan.

وَأَكِيدُ كَيْدًا ۚ ﴿١٧﴾

18. ^bSo give respite to the disbelievers. *Aye*, give them respite for a little while. **4680**

فَمَهِّلِ الْكَافِرِينَ أَمْهِلْهُمْ رُوَيْدًا ۚ ﴿١٨﴾

^a52:43. ^b68:45-46; 73:12.

4680. Commentary:

Disbelievers are granted respite that they may try all their evil plans and employ all the strength and resources they possess against Islam and the

Holy Prophet. The triumph of Islam, despite all their planning and their boasted strength, will be an irrefutable proof that it is from Allah and has His full support.

CHAPTER 87

AL-A‘LĀ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Title and Date of Revelation

This *Sūrah* was revealed very early in the Holy Prophet’s ministry at Mecca. Besides most commentators of the Quran, Muir and Nöldeke hold this view, the latter (Nöldeke) places its revelation after chapter 78, while some Muslim scholars assign it the eighth place in the chronological order of revelation of the Quran. The *Sūrah* takes its title from its opening verse in which glorification of the most High Lord has been enjoined.

Context and Subject Matter

In the preceding *Sūrah* it was stated that the Promised Reformer would not only be the Badr (moon of the 14th night) but also the *Ṭāriq* i.e. Morning Star, which heralds the dawn. Besides, it was stated that the Quran was not only a complete and perfect code of Divine laws for those to whom it was originally addressed but is also capable of meeting the needs and requirements of all mankind for all time, and that at no time will it be subject to change, abrogation or interpolation. This Quranic claim gives rise to the natural and inevitable question, viz. where was the need of a new Reformer in the presence of such a complete and perfect revelation. The *Sūrah* seeks to answer this important question. It was further mentioned in *Sūrah* Aṭ-Ṭāriq that man is so constituted that his development is subject to periods of rise and fall. This fact again gives rise to another equally important question, viz. that after the revelation of a Law, complete in all respects, man’s progress should naturally become uniform and uninterrupted and immune against all possibility of retrogression. This being so, why was a complete Shari‘ah not revealed in the beginning of the world; why was it deferred till the time of the Holy Prophet? The *Sūrah* supplies an answer to this question also.

The *Sūrah* possesses another intimate connection with its predecessor. In that *Sūrah* it was stated that man is born of a fluid which issues forth from the loins of his father and gets his sustenance from the breast of his mother. This constituted a subtle hint of the gradual process of man’s physical development. In the *Sūrah* under comment we are told that like his physical development man’s spiritual development will also be gradual.

The Holy Prophet generally recited this and the next *Sūrah* during Friday and ‘Īd Prayers.



(AL-A'LĀ)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the
Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Glorify the name of thy
Lord,^b the Most High,⁴⁶⁸¹

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى ②

3. ^cWho creates and
perfects,⁴⁶⁸²

الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسُوَّى ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b56:75; 69:53. ^c82:8; 91:8.

4681. Important Words:

For سَبِّح (glorify) see 61:2.

Commentary:

The verse may be interpreted as: (a) glorify the name of thy Lord, the most High; and (b) glorify the most high name of thy Lord. The words رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى (the most High Lord) signify that as God has created man for unlimited progress, therefore, He has endowed him with great natural powers and faculties that he may fulfil his high destiny; only his development is to be progressive and in stages. Incidentally, the Divine attribute رَبُّ (The Lord Who makes things grow and develop by stages) disposes of the objection, viz. why the perfect Law was not revealed in the beginning of creation? The word implies that perfect Law could only have been revealed after man's intellect and reason had attained their highest development which happened after a long and gradual process of evolution.

4682. Important Words:

قَدَّرَ means, he measured; determined; decreed; designed (Lane & Aqrab).

سَوَّى (perfected). سَوَّاهُ means, he made it equal, uniform, right; (2) he made it symmetrical; made it congruous or consistent in its several parts; (3) he made it to be adapted to the requirements of wisdom; (4) he made it complete, or perfected its make; he adjusted it; (5) God made his constitution symmetrical or made him complete and perfect (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse shows that a high destiny awaits man and that for the fulfilment of it God has endowed him with the highest natural faculties and capacities. He can attain the highest spiritual stature; can reflect in his person Divine attributes so as to become the mirror of his Creator. This implies that the Creator Himself is perfect and is completely free from all conceivable defects and weaknesses.

4. ^aAnd Who measures and guides,⁴⁶⁸³

وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَىٰ ۖ

5. And Who brings forth the pasturage,

وَالَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الْمَرْعَىٰ ۖ

6. Then turns it into black stubble^b.⁴⁶⁸⁴

فَجَعَلَهُ غُثَاءً أَحْوَىٰ ۖ

7. We shall teach thee *the Quran*, and thou shalt forget it not,⁴⁶⁸⁵

سَنُقَرِّئُكَ فَلَا تَنْسَىٰ ۖ

^a80:20. ^b18:46; 57:21.

4683. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse give four reasons for the glorification of God, viz. (1) God brought us into being. (2) He endowed us with all the faculties and capacities that are needed for our spiritual and intellectual development. (3) He determined man's physical and spiritual needs and (4) for the fulfilment of those needs He revealed guidance that man might attain the object of his creation.

4684. Important Words:

غُثَاء (stubble) means, the rubbish or refuse and scum and rotten leaves mixed with the scum borne upon the surface of a torrent; decayed and broken pieces of herbage that are seen upon a torrent; a perishable thing. They say ماله غُثَاءٌ وعمله هَبَاءٌ وسعيه خُفَاءٌ i.e. his property is as rubbish borne by a torrent and his work is as motes and his labour is unseen. غُثَاءُ النَّاسِ means, the refuse of mankind (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse constitutes a subtle answer to the objection: Why God

first revealed incomplete laws, suited only to the needs of the peoples and the periods in which they were revealed, and then revealed the last and most perfect Sharī'ah in the form of the Quran, which was meant to guide mankind for all time? It purports to say that God has created two kinds of things: (1) Those that like herbage and pasture satisfy man's temporary needs and thus have a limited tenure of life. The former Scriptures, like these things, fulfilled man's temporary needs and, therefore, were subject to decay and death. (2) Those things such as the sun, the moon, the earth, etc. which are of permanent use for man. They will last with the universe. Like the latter the Quran is meant to be man's unerring guide till the end of time; hence it is immune to change, replacement and the wasting effect of time.

4685. Commentary:

The verse develops the argument implied in the preceding one. It purports to say that the Quran being God's last Message for mankind has

8. ^aExcept as Allah wills. Surely, He knows *what is* manifest and *what is* hidden. **4686**

إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ^ط إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ
وَمَا يَخْفَى ^٨

9. ^bAnd We shall provide for thee *every* facility. **4687**

وَنُيَسِّرُكَ لِلْيُسْرَى ^٩

^a2:34; 20:8; 21:111; 24:30. ^b92:8.

been granted Divine protection against interference, distortion or interpolation. The promise of protection has been given in emphatic and clear terms, viz. "Verily, We Ourselves have sent down the Reminder, and most surely We will be its Guardian" (15:10). The last fourteen centuries have witnessed the fulfilment of this mighty prophecy, in that the Quran has become a part of the thought and life of the Muslims as a whole, so much, that at all times there is found in the world a section of Muslims who proclaim and uphold its true teachings and learn its text by heart. The Quran that we have with us today is the same, without the change of a word or letter, which was given to the world by the Holy Prophet.

The Holy Prophet was human and as such he was apt to forget and he did forget things as far as the affairs of life were concerned. But God, in His infallible wisdom, had so arranged that despite the fact that the Prophet was not literate and sometimes long *Sūrah*s were revealed to him in one piece, the revelation remained so indelibly imprinted on his mind that he was never found to forget or falter in reciting the revealed portions. It is marvellous indeed that

very long *Sūrah*s such as Al-Baqarah, Āl-e-ʿImrān or An-Nisā', were revealed piecemeal, and a period of several years had intervened between the revelation of different parts of each of those *Sūrah*s and yet the Prophet never for a moment fumbled or faltered in putting the revealed verses in their proper places.

4686. Commentary:

The expression "as God wills", pertains only to matters of ordinary everyday life.

The words, "He knows what is manifest and what is hidden," mean that as God knew all the needs of man of which man himself was unconscious and which he was incapable of knowing, God provided those needs in the Quran, and so there could be no possibility of the Holy Prophet forgetting what was revealed to him.

4687. Commentary:

The verse signifies: (a) that it is easy to commit the Quran to memory; (b) that its teachings possess an adaptability all their own, which makes them conform to, and meet, the exigencies of changing conditions and circumstances and the needs and requirements of men of different

10. So keep on reminding:
surely, reminding is
profitable.⁴⁶⁸⁸

فَذَكِّرْ إِن نَّفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَىٰ ۖ

11. ^aHe who fears will heed;

سَيَذَكِّرُ مَنْ يَخْشَى ۖ

12. But the most wretched will
turn aside from it,⁴⁶⁸⁹

وَيَتَجَنَّبُهَا الْأَشْقَى ۖ

13. He who is to enter the great
Fire.^b

الَّذِي يُصَلِّي النَّارَ الْكُبْرَى ۖ

14. ^cThen he will neither die
therein nor live.⁴⁶⁹⁰

ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَى ۖ

15. ^dVerily, he *truly* prospers
who purifies himself,

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى ۖ

16. And remembers the name of
his Lord and offers Prayers.

وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى ۖ

17. ^eBut you prefer the life of
this world,

بَلْ تُوْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ۖ

^a51:56. ^b88:5. ^c14:18; 20:75. ^d91:10. ^e75:21.

temperaments and dispositions; and (c) that the Quranic injunctions are not arbitrary but wise and rational. These factors combined together make the Quran a Book easy to learn and to act upon. These, among others, are some of the means which God has provided for the eternal protection and preservation of the Quranic text and its meaning.

4688. Commentary:

The verse means that only those people profit by admonition who have fear of God in their hearts. But as it is not given to one to know when admonition would be beneficial to a man, no opportunity should be lost to preach truth and righteousness.

4689. Commentary:

The verse signifies that for those people who, on account of their persistent defiance and rejection of truth and blind opposition to God's Messengers, incur punishment, a Divine decree comes into operation that they will not benefit by admonition.

4690. Commentary:

The unfortunate disbelievers will burn in grievous torment of an abiding character and death will not be allowed to end it; on the other hand, "death will come to him from every quarter but he will not die" (14:18). See also 20:75.

18. ^aWhereas the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى ۖ ط

19. ^bThis indeed is *what is taught* in the former Scriptures—

إِنَّ هَذَانِ فِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَى ۚ ل

20. The Scriptures of Abraham and Moses. ⁴⁶⁹¹

صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى ۚ ع

^a93:5. ^b20:134.

4691. Commentary:

Because the essential principles of all religions are basically identical, the teachings mentioned in the foregoing verses are also found in the Scriptures of Moses and Abraham. The verse may also signify that the

prophecy about the appearance of a great Prophet who was to give to the world the Last Divine Message and the most perfect teaching is found in the Scriptures of Moses (Deut. 18:18-19 & 33:2) and Abraham.

CHAPTER 88

AL-GHĀSHIYAH

(*Revealed before Hijrah*)

Date of Revelation

The *Sūrah*, like its predecessor, was revealed early at Mecca. Eminent early Muslim scholars such as Ibn ‘Abbās and Ibn Zubair regard it as of Meccan origin. The famous German orientalist Nöldeke places it in the fourth year of the Call.

Context and Subject Matter

This and the preceding *Sūrahs* deal with the collective life of the Muslim Community in the time of the Holy Prophet and also in the latter days, when the Promised Messiah was to appear. This is why the Holy Prophet generally used to recite these two chapters during Friday and ‘Id Prayers. In previous *Sūrahs* it was stated that the progress of Islam will never be due to material means but will come about through Divine Reformers. When Muslims will decline and decay and the Quran will, as it were, go up to heaven, God will raise the Promised Messiah who will bring it back to earth and will make its ideals and principles shine in resplendent glory. It was also stated that Islam will continue to have, in every age, sincere and devoted followers who will preach and propagate the teaching of the Quran, and that other unpredictable circumstances will also arise that will contribute to the progress and prosperity of Islam. In the present *Sūrah*, we are told that Muslims will have to face severe opposition and cruel persecution, and that after they will have patiently stood the test, success will come to them. Though the *Sūrah* deals primarily with the vicissitudes through which Muslims have to pass in this life, it also refers, as its name shows, to the Day of Resurrection. On the Day of Reckoning whether in this or in the next life, when the scales are set up, some faces will be downcast, covered with disgrace and ignominy and some others will beam with joy, being pleased with the results of their labour. Incidentally, the *Sūrah* contains a subtle hint that sometimes the followers of Islam will have to take up arms, and its success will then be due to the swords and spears of its warriors.



(AL-GHĀSHIYAH)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Has there come to thee the news of the Overwhelming Calamity^b?⁴⁶⁹²

هَلْ أَتَتْكَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ ②

3. *Some* faces on that day will be downcast^c; ⁴⁶⁹³

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَاشِعَةٌ ③

4. Toiling, weary. ⁴⁶⁹⁴

عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ ④

5. *They* shall enter a blazing Fire;^d

تَصْلِي نَارًا حَامِيَةً ⑤

6. *And* will be made to drink from a boiling spring;^e

تُسْقَى مِنْ عَيْنٍ آنِيَةٍ ⑥

7. They will have no food save that of dry, bitter and thorny herbage, ⁴⁶⁹⁵

لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيعٍ ⑦

^aSee 1:1. ^b12:108. ^c68:44; 75:25; 80:41-42. ^d87:13; 101:12. ^e47:16; 55:45.

4692. Important Words:

الغاشية (Overwhelming Calamity) is derived from غشى. They say غشيه i.e. it covered or overwhelmed him. غشى الليل means, the night was dark. غاشية means, an overwhelming calamity; a terrific misery (Lane).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse may be to the Judgement Day or to a terrific calamity that overtakes a people in this life, on account of their misdeeds. The severe famine that held Mecca in its grip for about seven years in the time of the Holy Prophet has also been referred to in the Quran as غاشية (44:11-12). It was

indeed a terrific calamity for the Meccans.

4693. Commentary:

وجه meaning 'chiefs' or 'leaders' of men; the verse signifies that on the Day of Reckoning the great leaders of disbelief will be debased and humiliation will be writ large on their faces.

4694. Commentary:

The verse means to say that all the endeavours of the leaders of disbelief against Islam will be wasted as they will fail to arrest or retard its progress.

4695. Important Words:

ضريع (dry, bitter and thorny herbage)

8. Which will neither nourish
nor satisfy hunger.⁴⁶⁹⁶

لَا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنْ جُوعٍ ۝٨

9. And some faces on that day
will be joyful,^a

وُجُوهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ ۝٩

10. Well pleased with their *past*
striving,⁴⁶⁹⁷

لِسَعِيْهَا رَاضِيَةٌ ۝١٠

11. In a lofty Garden,^b

فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ۝١١

12. Wherein thou wilt hear no
vain talk;^c

لَا تَسْمَعُ فِيْهَا لَاغِيَةً ۝١٢

13. ^dTherein is a running
spring,⁴⁶⁹⁸

نَّارٍ

فِيْهَا عَيْنٌ جَّارِيَةٌ ۝١٣

14. Therein are raised couches,

فِيْهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ ۝١٤

15. ^eAnd goblets properly
placed,

وَأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ ۝١٥

^a75:23. ^b69:23. ^c56:26; 78:36. ^d56:32. ^e43:72.

is derived from ضرع i.e. he (kid) took with his mouth the udder. This seems to be regarded by some as the primary signification of the word. All the three forms, viz. *ḍara'a* & *ḍari'a* & *ḍaru'a* mean, he was or became weak. ضرع means, a bad sort of pasture by which cattle do not become fat or fresh and which renders their condition bad; a certain dry, bitter, thorny plant (Lane).

4696. Commentary:

Vv. 3-8 signify that the enemies of Islam will try hard to check its progress. But all their efforts will prove abortive. Before their very eyes the tender plant of Islam will grow into a mighty tree and their own power and glory will depart. Their sons and grandsons will enter the fold

of Islam, and they will be consumed with rage and will burn in the fire of envy at seeing it spread fast; utter humiliation and ignominy will be their lot; they will be given hot water to drink and to eat which, instead of giving them nourishment or slaking their thirst and satisfying their hunger, will add to their weakness and hasten the withering away of their bodies—they will be utterly deprived of peace of mind, and calamities will overwhelm them in varying forms.

4697. Commentary:

The righteous believers will be well pleased with the marvellous results of the sacrifices they had made for the cause of Islam.

4698. Commentary:

Like a running spring their

16. And cushions *beautifully*
ranged in rows,

وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ ۝١٦

17. And carpets *tastefully*
spread.⁴⁶⁹⁹

وَزَرَائِي مَبْثُوثَةٌ ۝١٧

18. Do they not then look at the
camels, how they are
created?⁴⁷⁰⁰

أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ
كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ۝١٨

19. ^aAnd at the heaven, how it
is raised high?⁴⁷⁰¹

وَالِى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ۝١٩

20. ^bAnd at the mountains, how
they are set up?⁴⁷⁰²

وَالِى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ۝٢٠

^a13:3; 55:8. ^b50:8.

beneficence and goodness will flow
unceasingly.

4699. Commentary:

The *Sūrah* contains a contrast between the heavenly rewards that the righteous will receive and the severe punishment which will be meted out to the sinful for rejecting the Divine Message. The construction of this and the preceding eight verses shows that Muslims collectively will share in the gifts and rewards mentioned in them.

4700. Important Words:

الابل (camels) used as plural means, camels; a herd of camels; clouds (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that the believers, like camels, going straight in a line all behind the one that leads them, give unquestioning obedience to their Leader. Or like camels which can go on for days without water in the hot sandy desert of Arabia, the believers

have infinite patience under trials and go on their spiritual journey without complaining.

ابل as meaning clouds, the verse would signify that God will spread the teachings of the Quran which is spiritual water over the whole of the earth.

4701. Commentary:

And just as the heaven has been raised high, so will the Holy Prophet, the spiritual heaven, be exalted. Or the verse may mean that just as God has placed the sun, the moon, the stars and planets in the physical heaven and through them He sustains the physical world, so will the spiritual sun (the Holy Prophet), the spiritual moon (the Promised Messiah), the spiritual planets and stars (Muslim divines) sustain the spiritual world.

4702. Commentary:

The verse may signify that like mountains the believers are firm in

21. ^aAnd at the earth, how it is spread out?⁴⁷⁰³

وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ﴿٢١﴾ وَقَفَّهٖ

22. Admonish, therefore, for thou art but an admonisher;

فَذَكِّرْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. ^bThou art not *appointed* a warden over them.⁴⁷⁰⁴

لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. But whoever turns away and disbelieves,

إِلَّا مَنْ تَوَلَّى وَكَفَرَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. Allah will punish him with the greatest punishment.

فَيُعَذِّبُهُ اللَّهُ الْعَذَابَ الْأَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. Unto Us surely is their return,⁴⁷⁰⁵

إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. Then, surely, it is for Us to call them to account.

﴿٢٧﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُمْ ﴿٢٧﴾

^a50:8; 79:31. ^b6:108; 39:42; 42:7.

their faith, or like mountains which secure the earth against earthquakes and violent commotions and render it stable, the righteous servants of God are the cause of the stability of the spiritual world. But for them the violent earthquakes of disbelief and sin should shake the spiritual earth to its foundations and cause great havoc in it.

4703. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the earth has been spread out for the Companions of the Holy Prophet that they might carry the Message of Islam far and wide. The four verses (vv. 18-21) teach a Muslim the supreme moral lesson that he should be generous like the clouds, exalted like the heaven, of fixed resolve like the mountains, and soft and humble like the earth.

4704. Commentary:

The verse constitutes a wonderful commentary on the Divine origin of the Quran. The *Sūrah* was revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Call when only a handful of weak and poor persons had accepted Islam and yet the verse hints that a time would come when the Holy Prophet would be given power and authority, and he is enjoined in advance that when he should have power he should not use it for imposing his opinions on others.

4705. Commentary:

These last two verses show that the subject which had commenced in *Sūrah* Al-A'lā has come to an end here and disbelievers are told that they shall return to God to render account of their deeds and actions.

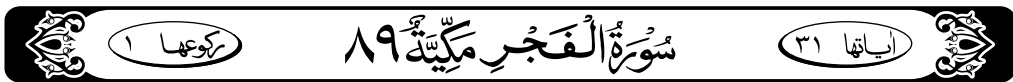
CHAPTER 89

AL-FAJR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

This *Sūrah* was among the earliest revealed at Mecca. From historical data and the contents of the *Sūrah* itself, it appears to have been revealed sometime in the fourth year of the Call. Nöldeke places it immediately after *Sūrah* Al-Ghāshiyah, which, according to Muslim scholars was also revealed in the fourth year, when opposition of the Quraish to the new Faith had not yet become determined, persistent and organized. The *Sūrah* takes its title from the first word of the opening verse, viz. *Al-Fajr*. It contains a double prophecy which applies both to the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah. In a beautiful allegory, the *Sūrah* alludes to the ten years of hardship at Mecca and the Prophet's Migration to Medina, accompanied by his very faithful Companion, Abū Bakr, and to the first year of his life at Medina which was also full of anxieties. The *Sūrah* may also be read as applying to the decline of Islam during the ten centuries after the first three hundred years of uniform success, and to the appearance of the Promised Messiah, as well as to the first century of trials and hardships for his mission and followers. After this brief allegorical description of the vicissitudes and fluctuations of the fortunes of Islam in the time of the Holy Prophet and that of the Promised Messiah, the *Sūrah* mentions the case of Pharaoh as representing the opposition which the cause of truth always encounters from the votaries of falsehood. Opposition to truth (the *Sūrah* further states) springs from accumulation of power and wealth in the hands of a particular class, and misuse of riches and authority by the people of that class brings about their decline and destruction. The *Sūrah* concludes that it is only a few fortunate people who accept the Divine Message and by walking in the ways of righteousness succeed in winning God's pleasure, and consequently enjoy complete immunity from fear of failure or faltering, and who, after joining the company of His Elect, enter His Heaven.



(AL-FAJR)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the Dawn,⁴⁷⁰⁶

وَالْفَجْرِ ②

3. And the Ten Nights,⁴⁷⁰⁷

وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ ③

^aSee 1:1.

4706. Commentary:

"The Dawn" may mean the Holy Prophet's Migration to Medina with which ended the ten dark nights or ten years of persecution of the Holy Prophet and his righteous and noble Companions at Mecca. "The Dawn" may also signify the advent of the Promised Messiah who brought a message of hope and of a bright future for Islam after ten dark centuries of its decline and decadence.

See also Introduction to the *Sūrah*.

4707. Commentary:

The word ليل meaning, a night, may signify one year after the Hijrah in the case of the Holy Prophet and one century in the case of the Promised Messiah. Thus "the Ten Nights" represent the ten dark years of severe persecution to which Muslims were subjected at Mecca before the Holy Prophet's Migration to Medina which has been likened to the break of the dawn in the preceding verse. Or "the Ten Nights" may refer to the ten centuries of the decline and decadence of Islam before the advent

of the Promised Messiah, with which ended a dark period of degradation, and which ushered in the dawn of a glorious future for Islam. An implied reference to these "Ten Nights" of the decline of Islam is also to be found in the Quranic verse: "He will plan the Divine Ordinance from the heavens unto the earth, then shall it go up to Him in a day the duration of which is thousand years according to what you reckon" (32:6). These ten centuries (or a thousand years) of the moral decadence of Muslims came after the first three centuries of the heyday of their glory and grandeur which have been called the best three centuries of Islam by the Holy Prophet (Bukhārī, *Kitābur-Riqāq*). The decline of Islam began towards the end of the third century A.H. when on the one hand an Umayyad Caliph of Spain signed a pact of mutual assistance with the Pope against the Abbasid Empire of Baghdad and, on the other, the Caliph of Baghdad entered into a treaty of friendship with the Caesar of Rome against the Umayyad Caliph of Spain.

4. And the Even and the
Odd,⁴⁷⁰⁸

وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِۙ

5. And the Night when it moves
on to its close,⁴⁷⁰⁹

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسِيرُۙ

4708. Commentary:

Continuing the allegory the word الشَّفْعِ (the Even) may allude to the Holy Prophet and Abū Bakr—his ever faithful Companion. The two of them made the number even, and God Who was with them in the hour of tribulation was الوتر (the Odd). To this "Even and Odd" number a pointed reference is to be found in the words *"One of the two when they were both in the cave, when he said to his Companion, 'Grieve not, for Allah is with us' (9:40).* Or the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah may be taken as making an even number and Allah an odd, because, while the Prophet in his first advent took refuge along with Abū Bakr in the Mount Thaur, Allah being with them; in his second advent, according to a revelation of the Promised Messiah, the Holy Prophet "took refuge in the fortress of India" (Tadhkirah), along with the Promised Messiah, Allah being the third of them. Or "the Even and the Odd" may signify that though the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah were two separate individuals, the Promised Messiah was completely lost in the Holy Prophet as to become one person with him.

4709. Commentary:

"The Night" may represent the first

year of the Hijrah which did not see any abatement of the Holy Prophet's anxieties and in which the Quraish of Mecca marched to the battlefield of Badr with a powerful army to give Islam a *coup de grace* from which it should never recover. It was in the Battle of Badr, about one year after the Hijrah, that the Quraish suffered an ignominious defeat and this literally fulfilled Prophet Isaiah's prophecy: "For thus hath the Lord said unto me, within a year, according to the years of an hireling, all the glory of Kedar shall fail." (Isa., 21:16) Thus though after the Migration to Medina the 'morning' had dawned for the Muslims, still they were not completely out of the wood; they had to suffer hardships for another night, i.e. a year. Or the verse may signify that after the advent of the Promised Messiah which heralded the break of the Dawn for Islam, its difficulties would not altogether disappear. One night of darkness—one century of difficulties—seems to lie ahead; after which Islam would march forward on a uniform course of success. Thus the *Sūrah* embodies a double prophecy which was made at a time when the prospects for Islam appeared to be very bleak indeed. It was remarkably fulfilled first, in the first phase of the chequered career of Islam, and it is at present in the process of being fulfilled in the shape of the

6. Is there *not* in it strong evidence for one of understanding?⁴⁷¹⁰

هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرٍ ۖ

7. Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with ‘Ād—⁴⁷¹¹

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ ۖ

8. *The tribe of Iram*, possessors of lofty buildings,⁴⁷¹²

إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ ۚ

9. The like of whom have not been created in *these* parts—⁴⁷¹³

الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ ۚ

10. ^aAnd *with* Thamūd who hewed out rocks in the valley,⁴⁷¹⁴

وَتَمُودَ الَّذِينَ جَابُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ ۚ

^a7:75; 26:150.

renaissance being wrought at the hands of the Promised Messiah, the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement.

4710. Important Words:

حِجْر (understanding) is inf. noun from حجر which means, he prevented, he hindered, debarred, withheld. They say فلان في حجر فلان i.e. such a one is in the protection of such a one. حجر means, the anterior pudendum of a man and of a woman; relationship; understanding, intelligence or reason. حجر ذو حجر means, a person who possesses understanding (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The prophecy contained in the above verses constitutes an invincible argument in support of the Divine origin of the Quran.

4711. Commentary:

The ‘Ād were a powerful and prosperous people of antiquity. They defied their Prophet Hūd and were

destroyed. For a detailed note on ‘Ād and Thamūd see 11:62.

4712. Important Words:

العماد (lofty buildings) is the plural of عمادة and عمود which are both derived from عمد. They say عمده i.e. he supported it. اعتمدت عليه means, I relied upon him in such a case. عماد means, lofty buildings. ذات العماد means, possessing lofty buildings supported by columns or possessing tallness; possessor of tents. فلان رفيع العماد means, such a one is a person of exalted nobility. هو عماد القوم means, he is the support of his people (Lane & Aqrab).

4713. Commentary:

The verse signifies that ‘Ād were a very powerful people in their time. They excelled their contemporary nations in material means and resources.

4714. Commentary:

See 7:75 & 11:62.

11. And *with* Pharaoh, lord of vast camps? **4714A**

وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ ۝

12. "Who transgressed in the cities,

الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ ۝

13. ^bAnd wrought much corruption therein.

فَاكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ ۝

14. Thy Lord then let fall on them the scourge of punishment. **4715**

فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ ۝

15. Surely, thy Lord is *ever* on the watch.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمُرْصَادِ ۝

16. As for man, when his Lord tries him and honours him and bestows favours on him, he says, 'My Lord has honoured me^c.'

فَأَمَّا الْإِنْسَانُ إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَأَكْرَمَهُ
وَنَعَّمَهُ ۖ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَكْرَمَنِ ۝

17. But when He tries him and straitens for him his *means* of subsistence,^d he says 'My Lord has disgraced me.' **4716**

وَأَمَّا إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ ۖ
فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَهَانَنِ ۝

^a28:5. ^b28:5. ^c17:84. ^d17:84.

4714A. Commentary:

See 38:13.

4715. Important Words:

سوط (whip) is derived from ساط. They say ساط i.e. he mixed it, one part with another, and stirred it about and beat it; he whipped him. فلان يسوط الحرب means, such a one manages or conducts the war in person. سوط means, a whip; scourge; a portion or share; vehemence or severity; a mixture; a place where water collects and stagnates (Lane & Aqrab).

4716. Commentary:

Favours are bestowed upon man,

sometimes to test his mettle, at other times, to reward him for his good actions. Similarly, he is caused to be involved in troubles that he may be tried, rewarded or punished according to his actions. But man is so constituted that when he is in ease and affluence, he regards it as the fruit of his labour and superior intelligence (28:79); but when misfortunes overtake him, he attributes them to God. The Quran has treated the question, whether God, or man himself, is the author of his destiny, from different angles. Whereas in 41:47 it says that man

18. ^aNay, but you honour not the orphan,

19. ^bAnd you urge not one another to feed the poor.

20. And you devour the heritage of other people wholly,⁴⁷¹⁷

21. ^cAnd you love wealth with exceeding love.⁴⁷¹⁸

كَأَلْبَلٍ لَا تَكْرُمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ ۝^{١٨}

وَلَا تَحْضُونَهُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ ۝^{١٩}

وَتَأْكُلُونَ التُّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَّمًّا ۝^{٢٠}

وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا ۝^{٢١}

^a107:3. ^b69:35; 90:17; 107:4. ^c104:3.

himself makes or mars his destiny, in 4:80 it says that good comes from God but evil from man's ownself, and yet in 4:79 it observes that both good and evil come from God. In fact, as God has created everything for the good of man, and it is by misusing God-given gifts that he involves himself in trouble, good is said to proceed from God and evil from man. But as God produces the results of the good or bad actions of man, good or evil are both said to come from God. And as man is a free agent, both good and evil are attributed to him. Thus these verses explain and support one another, there being no contradiction between them.

4717. Important Words:

لَمًّا (wholly). لَمَ الشَّيْءُ means, he gathered, amassed, concentrated the thing. They say لَمَ اللَّهُ شَعْتَ فَلَان i.e. God rectified or repaired and consolidated what was disorganised of the affairs of such a one. لَمَّا means, the whole; altogether; one's own part and that of another (Aqrab).

Commentary:

See next verse.

4718. Important Words:

جَمًّا (exceeding). جَمَ الْمَاءُ means, the water became much or abundant. جَمُوا means, they became many. جَمَاءُ كَثِيرًا means, they came all of them, none of them remaining behind. مَالٌ جَمٌّ means, much property. جَمٌّ means, plenty, abundance; exceeding; numerous (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Taken along with the preceding three verses, the verse under comment drives home to hoarders of wealth the evils of hoarding and says to them in effect: "You have been given wealth in abundance not as of right or as the result of superior intellect; you should not, therefore, feel injured or humiliated when you are deprived of it. It is given to you that you should spend it to meet the needs of the orphans and the poor, but you squander it in immoral pursuits, depriving others of their rights in it, or else you hoard it and refuse to spend it in noble causes." In fact inordinate love of money leads to three inevitable results: (a) It creates in man an excessive desire to keep on

22. Hearken when the earth is completely broken into pieces;⁴⁷¹⁹

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا ﴿٢٢﴾

23. ^aAnd thy Lord comes, attended by the angels, rank upon rank;⁴⁷²⁰

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ﴿٢٣﴾

24. And Hell is brought near that day;^b on that day man will remember,^c but of what avail shall that remembrance be to him?

وَجَاءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ وَأَنَّى لَهُ الذِّكْرَى ﴿٢٤﴾

25. He will say, 'O would that I had sent on *some good works* for my life *here!*'

يَقُولُ يَلَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي ﴿٢٥﴾

26. So on that day none can punish like unto His punishment,

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابَهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

^a2:111; 6:159; 16:34. ^b26:92. ^c79:36.

adding to his wealth, without spending it on good causes or on meeting the needs of the orphans and the poor. (b) It makes him careless about whether he acquires wealth by fair or by dishonest means. (c) In time of national peril, fear of possible success of the enemy renders his loyalty to his country doubtful. With the desire, in such an eventuality, to keep his life and property safe he does not take an active part in his country's defence. These are the main causes that lead to the destruction of a people. Islam takes as much care of the moral health of society as it takes of that of the individual; and society's health requires that material goods be

widely distributed and wealth kept in easy circulation.

4719. Commentary:

The verse warns disbelievers that as they do not possess the ingredients mentioned in the foregoing verses which are so essential for the maintenance of the moral health of a people, the time would surely come when they will become morally corrupt and will be seized with Divine punishment.

4720. Commentary:

"The coming of the Lord attended by the angels" is the Quranic idiom for imminent and destructive Divine punishment.

27. And none can bind like unto
His binding;⁴⁷²¹

وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقَهُ أَحَدٌ ۖ

28. *And* thou, O soul at
peace!⁴⁷²²

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۖ

29. Return to thy Lord well
pleased *with Him* and He well
pleased *with thee*.

ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ۚ

30. So enter thou among My
chosen servants,

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ۚ

31. And enter thou My Garden.

عِ

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي ۚ

4721. Commentary:

The Mill of God grinds slowly but it grinds exceedingly small. God is slow to punish but when His punishment overtakes a people, it is most destructive. "It spares not and it leaves naught" (74:29).

4722. Commentary:

The last four verses of the *Sūrah* constitute a befitting climax. They purport to say that he who acquires the prerequisites for full moral development, mentioned in the foregoing verses, becomes immune to all possibility of faltering or falling. He attains the highest stage of spiritual development; "he is well pleased with his Lord and his Lord is well pleased with him." At this stage, called the heavenly stage, man is

freed from all weakness and frailty and is braced with a peculiar spiritual strength. He becomes "united" with God and cannot exist without Him. As water flows with great force down a slope and, on account of its great mass and the total absence of all obstacles, dashes down with irresistible force, so the God-intoxicated man, at this stage, casting off all trammels, becomes attracted unrestrainedly towards his Maker. It is in this life and not after death that this great transformation takes place in him and it is in this world and not elsewhere that access to Paradise is granted to him. He finds his support only in God; He drinks deep at this fountain of spiritual life and is delivered from death.

CHAPTER 90

AL-BALAD

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

This *Sūrah* is one of the earliest revealed at Mecca. According to some Christian writers, Mr. Wherry among them, it was revealed in the first year of the Call. If not as early as that it was certainly revealed towards the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth year, inasmuch as it has a close connection with a number of some preceding *Sūrahs*. It takes its title from the opening verse.

In *Sūrah* Al-Fajr, it was stated that jibes, mockery and taunts to which the Holy Prophet had been subjected in the first three years of his mission, were about to give place to determined, persistent and organized opposition and persecution and that this persecution would continue for ten long years which allegorically were mentioned as "Ten Nights." In the *Sūrah* under comment the Holy Prophet is told that it is in Mecca, his beloved native town, and by his own kith and kin, that he and his followers will be persecuted. It is further mentioned that centuries ago, in pursuance of Divine command, the Patriarch Abraham and his righteous son, Ishmael, had laid the foundations of this sacred town and had prayed to God that it should become the centre from where should emanate the light which should illumine the world for all time to come. Both the father and the son made great sacrifices in carrying out the commands of God. Abraham's prayer was heard and the Holy Prophet appeared in the fullness of time, and gave to the world the perfect teaching which enabled man to achieve the noble object of his creation and to lead a happy and prosperous life. But man chose the easy path and refused to attempt "the ascent" that led to the achievement of his great goal. The *Sūrah* ends on the note that only those who place before them high ideals and then live up to them achieve their goal, while those who have no noble ideals and make no sacrifice are condemned to a life of failure and frustration.



(AL-BALAD)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bNay, I call to witness this City—⁴⁷²³

لَا أَقْسِمُ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ ②

3. And thou art a dweller in this City—⁴⁷²⁴

وَأَنْتَ حَلٌّ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b52:5; 95:4.

4723. Commentary:

According to some authorities, the particle لا has been used here to draw pointed attention to the subject which is about to be introduced. According to them, the meaning of the verse is: "Listen! Listen! I call to witness this city." Some other scholars think that the verse signifies that the subject which is going to be introduced is so clear and obvious that it needs no swearing to support it. Yet according to another school the particle is intended to refute an understood objection and the meaning of the verse is: "Not that thou art a forger, as the disbelievers think. Thou art not a forger but a true Prophet of God and this city is called to bear witness to this fact." But more appropriately the verse would mean something like this: "You harbour evil designs about Islam, O, disbelievers! I know what is in your minds, but I tell you that it would never happen as you desire, and I cite this city as a witness to this fact."

4724. Important Words:

حل (dweller) is derived from حل

which means, he was or became free from an obligation or responsibility; it was or became lawful. They say حل عليهم العذاب i.e. the punishment alighted upon them or the punishment was necessitated by the requirements of justice to take effect upon them. حل بالمكان means, he alighted or dwelt in the house. حل حقى عليه means, the discharge of my right became obligatory on him. حل (hillun) means: (1) the place outside the sacred precincts of Mecca; (2) the thing the doing of which is lawful; (3) target; (4) free from obligation; (5) alighting or dwelling in a place (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

According to the different meanings of the word حل given under Important Words the verse would signify: (1) It is considered lawful to do you any harm, even to kill you, in this city of Mecca which is so sacred that the doing of harm to a living creature in its precincts, not to say of killing it, is strictly forbidden. (2) Thou alone art the target of every conceivable abuse, harm, injury, cruelty or violence against life, property or honour in this

4. And the begetter and whom
he begot,⁴⁷²⁵

وَوَالِدٍ وَمَا وَلَدَ ۝

5. "We have surely created man
to toil and struggle.⁴⁷²⁶

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ ۝

^a84:7.

Sacred City. (3) Thou wilt alight as a conqueror in this city from where thou art being driven out as a fugitive. (4) Thou wilt be freed from obligation to observe the sacredness of this city when thou wilt enter it as a victor and wilt punish those wicked persons who had placed themselves outside the pale of law by perpetrating unutterable cruelties on innocent Muslims.

What a mighty prophecy! It was made at a time when opposition to the Holy Prophet was still confined to mocking and jeering at him. The *Sūrah* as stated in the Introduction, was revealed towards the end of the third year of the Call when Islam had not yet begun to be preached openly nor had the Meccans awakened to a realization of the danger which the new Faith subsequently proved to be and, therefore, considered it beneath their dignity to offer it any opposition.

4725. Commentary:

While raising the foundations of the Ka'bah, the Patriarch Abraham and his son Ishmael had prayed: "And our Lord, raise among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy signs and teach them the Book and wisdom and may purify them" (2:130). The expression "the father and the son" refers to Abraham and Ishmael, and the verse purports to say that God had His own

plan to accomplish by getting the structure of the Ka'bah raised up by Abraham and Ishmael. This plan was to send the greatest of His Messengers and to give him the Final and most Perfect Law in the form of the Quran for the eternal guidance of mankind. That Divine plan has been fulfilled in the person of the Holy Prophet. Thus "the father and the son" stand as a witness to the truth of his Divine claim. Or "the father and the son," may refer to the Holy Prophet and his noble followers, and the verse may signify that the Holy Prophet himself and his followers constitute a proof of the Divine origin of his mission. Their spotless character, their good qualities of head and heart, the great sacrifices they are making in the cause of truth—all leave no room for doubt that they will succeed in their mission and that those who stand in their way will fail.

4726. Important Words:

كَبَدَ (toil). كَبَدَ means, he smote his liver or stomach. كَبَدَ means, difficulty; distress; affliction; the middle of the sky. فِي كَبَدٍ means, in a state in which he has to work hard. It also means, in a right and just state; in just proportion; in an erect state (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the prophecy made in the foregoing

6. ^aDoes he think that no one has power over him?⁴⁷²⁷ أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَنْ يَّقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ ۖ
7. He says, 'I have spent enormous wealth.'⁴⁷²⁸ يَقُولُ أَهْلَكْتُ مَالًا لُبَدًا ۖ
8. Does he think that no one sees him?⁴⁷²⁹ أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَمْ يَرَهُ أَحَدٌ ۙ
9. Have We not given him two eyes,
10. And a tongue and two lips? وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ ۚ
11. ^bAnd We have pointed out to him the two highways of good and evil.⁴⁷³⁰ وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ ۚ

^a96:15. ^b76:4.

verses, viz. that the Holy Prophet will be expelled from Mecca but will come back to it as a conqueror and that Mecca will submit to him, and its inhabitants will enter his fold, will be fulfilled only after he and his followers had gone through great hardships, that is to say, great toil and incessant struggle will be demanded of them to achieve their great goal.

4727. Commentary:

The verse warns disbelievers that if they think that they can suppress Islam and by means of their wealth and influence can arrest its progress, they labour under a serious misconception. God is aware of their evil designs and He has the power and will bring them to nought.

4728. Important Words:

لُبَدٌ (enormous) means, much wealth; wealth so abundant that there is no fear of its being exhausted; wealth collected in heaps (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Let the opponents of Islam use all their means (the verse purports to say) and spend heaps of wealth to stop spread of Islam, they will not succeed in their evil designs and Islam will continue to make both spiritual and political conquests.

4729. Commentary:

The verse means that God sees deep into the hearts of opponents of the Holy Prophet. All their endeavours and designs to bring about the failure of his Movement will prove abortive.

4730. Important Words:

النَّجْدَيْنِ (two highways). نَجْدٌ is inf. noun from نَجَدَ (najada). نَجَدَهُ means, he helped him. أُنْجِدَ الْبَنَاءُ means, the building rose high. نَجْدٌ (najdun) means, high and elevated land; an elevated or conspicuous road; a road in a mountain; a plain or evident

12. But he attempted not the steep ascent.⁴⁷³¹

فَلَا اقْتَحَمَ الْعَقَبَةَ ۚ

13. And what should make thee know what the steep ascent is?

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْعَقَبَةُ ۚ

14. *It is* the freeing of a slave.

فَكَرَبَةٍ ۚ

15. ^aOr feeding on a day of hunger⁴⁷³²

أَوْ اطْعَمْتُ يَوْمَ مَسْغَبَةٍ ۚ

16. An orphan near of kin.

يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ ۚ

17. Or a poor man *lying* in the dust.⁴⁷³³

أَوْ مَسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ ۚ

^a76:9; 89:19.

affair; a skilful guide (Lane & Aqrab). النجدين signifies, the two high or conspicuous ways of good and evil, of truth and falsehood, of spiritual and material progress (Aqrab).

Commentary:

God has provided man with all those means by which he can find out the right path, can sift right from wrong and truth from falsehood. He has been endowed with both spiritual and physical eyes that he may distinguish good from evil. He has been given a tongue and two lips that he might ask for guidance, and above all God has placed before him a supreme object that he may devote all his faculties and energies to achieve it.

4731. Important Words:

اقتحم (attempted). They say في الامر اقتحم i.e. he rushed or plunged into the affair without consideration. اقتحم المنزل means, he entered the place suddenly and without permission; rushed suddenly upon the place; he invaded or attacked the place. اقتحم العقبة means,

he ascended or attacked or rushed upon عقبه which means, hill; mountain; high place; steep road (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that through the Holy Prophet God had opened up for the Arabs all the ways and means by using which they could make unlimited spiritual and material progress but they refused to make the necessary sacrifices required to achieve the two objectives. See also next verse.

4732. Important Words:

مسغبة (hunger) is derived from سغب which means, he was or became hungry or suffered hunger, together with fatigue. أسغب القوم means, the people entered upon a state of hunger. They say به مسغبة i.e. in him is hunger or hunger together with fatigue (Lane & Aqrab).

4733. Commentary:

These verses (vv. 14-17) speak of

18. Then, he should have been of those who believe and exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to mercy^a. **4734**

ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا
بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ ۝١٨

19. These are the people of the right hand^b. **4735**

أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ ۝١٩

20. But those who disbelieve Our Signs, they are the people of the left hand^c. **4735A**

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا هُمْ
أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ ۝٢٠

21. Around them will be a fire closed over^d. **4736**

عَلَيْهِمْ نَارٌ مُّؤَصَّدَةٌ ۝٢١

^a103:4. ^b56:28; 69:20; 84:8-9. ^c56:42; 69:26; 84:11-12. ^d104:9.

the two methods to raise the moral stature of a people: (a) Freeing of the slaves, i.e. raising the suppressed, oppressed and depressed sections of the community to an equal partnership in life. (b) Helping the orphans and the poor to stand on their own legs and to become useful members of the community.

4734. Commentary:

The verse points out that the doing only of good actions mentioned in the foregoing verses is not enough for raising the all round stature of a community. Good ideals and right principles, combined with continuous and sustained adherence to the path of moral rectitude and the teaching of

virtues to others, are equally essential for the attainment of the above-mentioned high aim.

4735. Commentary:

See 56:9.

4735A. Commentary:

See 56:10.

4736. Important Words:

مُؤَصَّدَةٌ (closed over) is derived from وُصِدَ (closed over) i.e. he remained in the place. وُصِدَ الباب means, he closed or shut the door. مَوْصَدَةٌ means, shut, closed (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The disbelievers will burn in a species of fire which being closed on all sides will be most destructive.

CHAPTER 91

ASH-SHAMS

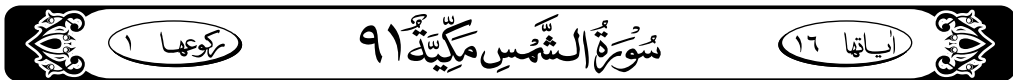
(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

This *Sūrah* admittedly belongs to the very early Meccan period. Some scholars regard it as having been revealed in the first year of the Call; others assign it to the second or third year. It takes its title from the first word of the opening verse.

The five *Sūrahs* (89-93) possess a striking similarity in subject matter. In all of them great stress has been laid on the development of good morals, specially those good qualities that intimately concern and affect the progress and prosperity of a community. Muslims have been exhorted to create an atmosphere and an environment which should help to raise the standing and stature of the poor, depressed and suppressed section of their Community and should enable them to take their proper share in its activities.

The preceding chapter contained a hint about the supreme object for which Abraham and his son, Ishmael, had built the Ka'bah. That supreme object is explained in the prayer—"Our Lord raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise (2:130). It is to the Holy Prophet, Muḥammad, and his great moral qualities that this *Sūrah* refers. Towards its close the *Sūrah* points out that moral greatness can be achieved by anyone who eschews evil and walks in the path of righteousness. The *Sūrah* ends on the note that those who choose to defy Divine laws and adopt evil ways work out their own ruin.



(ASH-SHAMS)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the sun and his growing brightness,⁴⁷³⁷

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا ②

3. And by the moon when she follows him (the sun),⁴⁷³⁸

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَّهَا ③

^aSee 1:1.

4737. Important Words:

وا is a particle of swearing, meaning 'by' or 'I swear' or 'I cite as witness or call to witness' (Lane & Aqrab). See also 37:2.

الشمس (the sun), is a substantive noun from شمس (shamasa). They say شمس الرجل i.e. the man abstained from and refused to obey because he considered himself too big to give allegiance to anyone. شمس الفرس means, the horse refused to be ridden or became rebellious against its rider and ran away refusing to be ridden by reason of the vehemence of its force of resistance. شمس لي فلان means, such a one showed enmity to me (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

God's swearing by His creatures is a method adopted by the Quran. The Quranic oaths have deep meaning underlying them. In ordinary transactions when a person takes an oath, his object is to supply the deficiency of insufficient testimony. The object and meaning of God's oaths must, however, be distinguished from those of the oaths of mortals.

Divine laws reveal two aspects of the works of God, viz. the obvious and the inferential. The former are easily comprehensible; in the comprehension of the latter there is room for error. In the taking of oaths God has called attention to what may be inferred from what is obvious.

Taking the oaths mentioned in the following verses, we see that the sun and the moon, the day and the night, heavens and earth belong to the "obvious;" their properties as referred to in these verses are universally known and acknowledged. But the same properties found in man's soul are not obvious. To lead to an inference of the existence of these properties in the soul of man God has called to witness His obvious works.

"The sun" in the verse may refer to the sun of the spiritual universe—the Holy Prophet—who is the source of all light and who will continue to enlighten the world till the end of time. For a detailed note on this and the following five verses see v. 7.

4738. Important Words:

قمر الشيء (the moon). They say

4. *And* by the day when it reveals his glory,⁴⁷³⁹

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّلَهَا ۝

5. *And* by the night when it draws a veil over him.⁴⁷⁴⁰

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا ۝

6. *And* by the heaven and its make,⁴⁷⁴¹

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا ۝

i.e. the brightness of the thing became intense. قمر means, the moon; a star which borrows its light from the sun and reflects it on to the earth and thus removes the darkness of the night. (Lane & Aqrab). See also 54:2.

تلاها (follows him). تلوته means, I followed him or it immediately or without intervention. هو يتلو فلاناً means, he imitates such a one and follows what he does (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2:103.

Commentary:

"The moon" may be taken as referring to the Holy Prophet, who like the moon, draws his light from God and transmits it to the spiritually dark world. Or it may refer to those religious divines and Reformers—particularly the Promised Messiah—who borrow the light of truth from the Holy Prophet and transmit it to the world to remove the darkness of moral and spiritual turpitude.

4739. Commentary:

"The day" may signify the time during which the Message of Islam and the truth of its Founder was further fortified and foundations were laid for the universal propagation of the vital doctrines of the new Faith. The reference in the verse may particularly be to the time of the

Rightly Guided Caliphs—the first four Successors of the Holy Prophet. In their time the light of Islam revealed its glory and splendour to the world.

4740. Commentary:

"The night" may refer to the period of decline and decadence of Muslims when the light of Islam had become veiled from the eyes of the world. These four verses (2-5) refer to four periods in the eventful career of Islam, viz. (1) the time of the Holy Prophet himself when the spiritual sun (the Holy Prophet) was shining in full splendour in the spiritual heaven; (2) the time of the Promised Messiah when the light derived from the Holy Prophet was being reflected on to a dark world; (3) the time of the Holy Prophet's immediate Successors when the light of Islam was still shining and, (4) the period when spiritual darkness had spread over the world after the first three centuries of Islam which was its most glorious period.

4741. Commentary:

The particle ما (mā) in this and the next two verses is either مصدرية (maṣdariyyah) as in the text, or it stands for من meaning, 'He Who.' Thus in these verses attention has

7. *And* by the earth and its expanse,

وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَاطِحَهَا ۝٧

8. *And* by the soul and its perfection—**4742**

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّيَهَا ۝٨

9. And He revealed to it the ways of evil and the ways of righteousness—**4743**

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ۝٩

been focused on the great Designer and Architect of the universe, and on the perfection and complete freedom from flaw or defect in the design and creation of man and the universe.

4742. Commentary:

The verse means that all the properties and forces which the great heavenly bodies such as the sun and the moon, etc. devote to the service of God's creatures and to which reference has been made in the following verses bear witness to man having been endowed with similar qualities in a high degree. In fact, man is a universe in miniature and in his soul is represented, on a small scale, all that exists in the external universe. Like the sun he sheds his lustre over the world and enlightens it with the light of wisdom and knowledge. Like the moon he transmits to those who are in the dark the light of vision, inspiration and revelation which he borrows from the Great Original Source. He is bright like the day, and shows the ways of truth and virtue. Like the night he draws the veil over the faults and misdeeds of others, lightens their burdens and gives rest to the tired and the weary. Like the heavens he takes

every distressed soul under his shelter and revives the lifeless earth, with salubrious rain. Like the earth he submits in all humility and lowliness to be trampled under the feet by others as a trial for them, and from his purified soul various sorts of trees of knowledge and truth grow up in abundance, and with their shade, flowers and fruits, he spiritually regales the world. Such are the great divines and Heavenly Reformers, of whom the greatest and the most perfect was the Holy Prophet.

4743. Commentary:

The verse means that after creating the celestial and the terrestrial systems, and bringing into existence man—the acme and apex of the whole creation—and endowing him with great natural potentialities and qualities, God did not leave him alone. He implanted in his nature a feeling or sense of what is good or bad. Or the verse may mean that God reveals to man that he could achieve spiritual perfection by eschewing what is bad and wrong and adopting what is right and good because it is through Divine revelation that man could achieve it.

10. He indeed *truly* prospers
who purifies it,⁴⁷⁴⁴

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۖ

11. And he who corrupts it is
ruined.⁴⁷⁴⁵

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ۖ

12. *The tribe of* Thamūd
rejected the Divine Messenger
because of their
rebelliousness.⁴⁷⁴⁶

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَاهَا ۖ

13. When the most wretched
among them got up,

إِذَا نُبِغَتْ أَشْقَاهَا ۖ

14. Then the Messenger of
Allah said, '*Leave alone* the
she-camel of Allah, and *let* her
drink.'⁴⁷⁴⁷

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ نَاقَةَ اللَّهِ
وَسُقِيهَا ۖ

15. But they recced him and
hamstrung her, so their Lord
destroyed them completely
because of their sin, and made it

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا ۖ فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ
رَبُّهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ فَسَوَّاهَا ۖ

4744. Important Words:

زكا (purifies) is transitive from زكا (zaka) which means, it increased or augmented. زكا الزرع means, the harvest grew and increased. زكا الغلام means, the boy grew up. العلم يزكو على الانفاق means, knowledge increases by expending (Lane & Aqrab).

4745. Important Words:

دسا (corrupts). دساها means, he hid it; he buried it; he corrupted it. من دساها means, who corrupts it; makes it vile by evil works; who makes it obscure or stuns its growth (Lane & Aqrab).

4746. Commentary:

In this and the next four verses is

cited the example of the tribe of Thamūd who defied Divine guidance and opposed their Prophet working out thereby their own ruin.

4747. Commentary:

The Prophet Ṣāliḥ kept the she-camel for travels. He rode on it from place to place to preach the Divine Message. Putting obstacles in the way of its free movements was tantamount to placing impediments in the way of Ṣāliḥ himself and preventing him from discharging the sacred duty entrusted to him. In fact, every Divine Reformer is ناقة الله (God's she-camel).

(destruction) *overtake all of them* alike.⁴⁷⁴⁸

16. And He cared not for the consequence thereof.⁴⁷⁴⁹

وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقْبَاهَا ۝

4748. Important Words:

دمدم عليهم (destroyed them completely). They say دمدم فلان على فلان i.e. such a one spoke to such a one in anger. دمدم عليه means, he destroyed or crushed him completely or punished him thoroughly. دمدم عليهم ربهم means, their Lord crushed them, punished them and destroyed them completely; or made the earth to quake with them or was angry with them (Lane & Aqrab).

4749. Commentary:

When a people incur Divine punishment and are thus destroyed. God does not care for those who survive the destruction or for the utterly miserable state to which they are reduced. The verse may also be taken as containing a warning to the Meccans that if they behaved like the Thamūd, they will be punished like them.

CHAPTER 92

AL-LAIL

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

Prominent Muslim scholars, including two distinguished Companions of the Holy Prophet—‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbās and ‘Abdullāh bin Zubair—are of the view that the *Sūrah* was revealed very early at Mecca. William Muir also agrees with this opinion. The *Sūrah* takes its title from the first word of the opening verse.

The *Sūrah* possesses very close resemblance with some previous chapters, especially with Al-Fajr and Al-Balad. In the immediately preceding *Sūrah*, Ash-Shams, it was hinted that the supreme object of the building of the Ka‘bah, which is the principal theme of *Sūrah* Al-Balad, could not have been achieved without a great Divine Messenger—the soul par excellence. In the present *Sūrah* we are told that when an ideal teacher, as the Holy Prophet, is blessed with ideal disciples like his Companions, advance of the cause of truth is doubly accelerated. The *Sūrah* also mentions some of the prominent moral qualities that distinguished the Companions of the Holy Prophet. In contrast, two glaring bad qualities that lead to the undoing of a man are also mentioned.



(AL-LAIL)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bBy the night when it covers up!⁴⁷⁵⁰

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى ①

3. ^cAnd by the day when it shines forth,⁴⁷⁵¹

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّى ②

4. ^dAnd by the creation of the male and the female,⁴⁷⁵²

وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b91:5. ^c91:4. ^d36:37; 51:50; 78:9.

4750. Commentary:

In this verse "the night when it covers up" has been cited as a witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet. It is a Divine law that when darkness spreads over the earth, a heavenly Reformer is raised. And now that humanity is groping in spiritual darkness God has raised the Holy Prophet in order that His servants might be rescued from the "Slough of Despond" in which they are stuck up.

In the preceding *Sūrah* the principal subject of discussion was Ash-Shams, i.e. the Holy Prophet, who is the source and spring of all light. This is why mention of the sun and the day precedes that of the moon and the night. But in the present *Sūrah* a contrast is instituted between believers and disbelievers, and as the latter are generally larger in number and wield greater power and influence, mention of the night precedes that of the day.

4751. Commentary:

The verse signifies that with the appearance of the Holy Prophet the night of disbelief is about to give place to the day of belief.

By the substitution of the word تجلى (shines forth) in this verse in place of جلاها (reveals its glory) in the corresponding verse in the preceding *Sūrah* it is hinted that whereas in the preceding *Sūrah* the emphasis was on the high spiritual stature of the teacher, in the present *Sūrah* it is on the great ability of the pupils to learn and assimilate the teaching.

4752. Commentary:

Procreation of man depends upon the coming together of two individuals of opposite sexes. The characteristic quality of the one (the male) is to give, of the other (the female) to receive. Like the physical world there are in the spiritual world males—God's great Prophets and Divine Reformers—who teach and

5. Surely, your strivings are diverse.⁴⁷⁵³

إِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتَّى ۝

6. Then as for him who gives *for the cause of Allah* and is righteous,

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى ۝

7. And testifies to *the truth*, of what is right,⁴⁷⁵⁴

وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى ۝

8. "We will provide for him *every facility*."⁴⁷⁵⁵

فَسَنِّيَرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَى ۝

^a87:9.

guide, and there are also spiritual females—their followers—who receive and benefit by the Divine teaching. The verse embodies a hint that by the coming together of the perfect teacher—the Holy Prophet—and the ideal pupils—his Companions—a new world is about to be born.

4753. Important Words:

شَتَّى (diverse). They say شت الاشياء i.e. he disunited or dispersed the things. أمرشت means, a broken or disorganized state of affairs. قوم شتى means, a people separated or consisting of sundry bodies. جاؤوا اشتاتاً means, they came separate (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse draws attention to the widely divergent goals of believers and disbelievers, and also to the disparity in the endeavours they make to achieve their respective goals. Whereas the efforts of believers are devoted to the dissemination of truth, those of disbelievers are directed towards opposing it and putting obstacles and impediments in its way.

The results of the two efforts must inevitably be different.

4754. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse mention three characteristics of persons who are successful in life, viz. they spend in the cause of truth out of what God has bestowed upon them, and are always on their guard against doing anything that may harm others. Over and above this, they adopt good principles and right ideals. Briefly, right action, right feeling and right thinking are the three essential prerequisites for national progress and prosperity which believers possess in an ample measure.

4755. Commentary:

The verse means that the person who possesses the three characteristic qualities mentioned in the preceding two verses, will find that his actions are productive of the desired results. Or it may mean that the doing of good deeds will become easy for such a person and he will enjoy doing them.

9. But as for him who is
niggardly and is *disdainfully*
indifferent,⁴⁷⁵⁶

وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَىٰ ۝٩

10. And rejects what is right,

وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ۝١٠

11. We will make easy for him
the path to distress.⁴⁷⁵⁷

فَسَيَسِّرُهُ لِّلْعُسْرَىٰ ۝١١

12. ^aAnd his wealth shall not
avail him when he perishes.⁴⁷⁵⁸

وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّىٰ ۝١٢

13. ^bSurely, it is for Us to guide;

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَىٰ ۝١٣

14. And to Us belongs the
Hereafter as well as the present
world.⁴⁷⁵⁹

وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَىٰ ۝١٤

15. So I warn you of a flaming
Fire.

فَأَنذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّىٰ ۝١٥

16. ^cNone shall enter it but the
most wicked one,

لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَىٰ ۝١٦

17. ^dWho rejects *the truth* and
turns *his* back.⁴⁷⁶⁰

الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ۝١٧

^a3:11; 58:18; 111:3. ^b2:273; 28:57. ^c20:75; 87:12-13. ^d20:49.

4756. Commentary:

In contrast to the three good qualities mentioned in the preceding two verses (6-7), the three bad qualities that lead to the undoing of a man are mentioned in these two verses (9-10).

4757. Commentary:

The verse means that the actions of the person referred to in the preceding verse miss their mark and produce results contrary to what he expects or desires. Or it may mean that the doing of good deeds becomes difficult for such a person.

4758. Commentary:

The expression "When he perishes" signifies, that when Divine decree regarding his destruction comes into operation, nothing can avail him to avert or escape Divine punishment.

4759. Commentary:

The wicked disbelievers face failure in this life and will suffer punishment in the Hereafter because both the worlds are under God's control.

4760. Commentary:

كذب (rejects the truth) signifies that

18. But the righteous *one* shall
be kept away from it,

وَسَيَجْزِيهَا الْآتِقَى ۝١٨

19. Who gives his wealth that
he may be purified.

الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّى ۝١٩

20. And he owes no favour to
anyone, which is to be repaid,

وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَهُ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ تُجْزَى ۝٢٠

21. Except *that he gives his
wealth* to seek the pleasure of
his Lord, the Most High. **4761**

إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى ۝٢١

22. And soon will He be well
pleased *with him*.

ع ٢٢
١٧

وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَى ۝٢٢

the sinful disbeliever holds wrong
beliefs and *تولى* implies that he does
not make use of right feeling, right
thinking and right actions. Thus he is
deprived of these qualities.

others not in return for any good
received from them but actuated by a
desire to be of use to God's creatures
and to win the pleasure of his
heavenly Lord and Master.

4761. Commentary:

The righteous believer does good to

CHAPTER 93

AD-ḌUḤĀ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

After the first two or three *Sūrahs* had been revealed, revelation ceased to come to the Holy Prophet for sometime. The present *Sūrah* is among those which were revealed soon after revelation started coming again. Thus the *Sūrah* should be deemed to have been revealed very early at Mecca. Nöldeke places it after Al-Balad, and Muir puts it near to *Sūrah* Al-Inshirāḥ in chronological order. It is surprising that such a bigoted Christian missionary as Mr. Wherry should also have assigned a very early date to this *Sūrah* which embodies a prophecy that every morrow of the Holy Prophet would be better than his yesterday, and this process will continue till his cause would meet with complete success. This prophecy had remarkable fulfilment in the mounting triumphs of the Holy Prophet.

In subject matter, the *Sūrah* very much resembles some of its predecessors. Like them, it lays stress on the evils to which the Meccans were specially addicted, with this difference that in this *Sūrah* the Holy Prophet and his followers have been enjoined to make proper use of their money, but in the preceding *Sūrahs* a contrast was drawn between the believers' and the disbelievers' treatment of the orphans and the needy. Moreover, in the preceding *Sūrah* it was briefly stated that the righteous believer spends his wealth in the way of God but in the *Sūrah* under comment mention is made of the blessings that God bestows upon His chosen servants with a particular reference to the Holy Prophet. Thus the *Sūrah* serves as a sequel to the one preceding it.



(AD-DUHĀ)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the *growing* brightness of the Forenoon, ⁴⁷⁶²

وَالضُّحَىٰ ②

3. ^bAnd by the night when its darkness spreads out, ⁴⁷⁶³

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ ③

4. Thy Lord has not forsaken thee, nor is He displeased *with thee*. ⁴⁷⁶⁴

مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b81:18

4762. Commentary:

"The brightness of the Forenoon" signifies the rise and progress of Islam. The verse, therefore, purports to say that the phenomenal use of Islam will establish the truth of the Holy Prophet. الضُّحَى may also refer to the particular forenoon when the Holy Prophet entered Mecca at the head of an army of ten thousand holy warriors and the Ka'bah was cleared of idols.

4763. Important Words:

سَجَى (spreads out). سَجَا اللَّيْلُ means, the night was quiet; was or became dark and its darkness extended; was or became continuous; or the night was covered by its darkness (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse signifies that the prolonged period of the decline of Islam will also bear witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet in that

according to his prophecies the decline will be followed by its renaissance.

"The Night" may also have reference to that particular night when after the fall of darkness the Holy Prophet went out of his house and took refuge in Cave Thaur along with Abū Bakr. In fact the night when the Holy Prophet left Mecca and the day on which Mecca fell, give in a nutshell the various ups and downs of the Holy Prophet's whole career.

4764. Important Words:

قَلَى (has forsaken). They say قَلَى الرَّجُلُ i.e. he hated the man and disliked him so much that he forsook him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Every day and night of the Holy Prophet; his great successes and temporary setbacks; his joys and tribulations; his devotions at night and activities in the day, all bear out that God was with him.

5. Surely *every hour* ^athat follows is better for thee than *the one* that precedes.⁴⁷⁶⁵

وَلِلْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَى ۝

6. And thy Lord will ^bsoon give thee and thou wilt be well pleased.^{4765A}

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَى ۝

7. Did He not find thee an orphan and give *thee* shelter?⁴⁷⁶⁶

أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَى ۝

^a87:18. ^b108:2

4765. Commentary:

The verse means that every succeeding moment of the Holy Prophet's life is better than the one that precedes. To mention a few landmarks in his career, one may observe that he left Mecca with a single Companion, a price having been put on his head. He entered the same town after a brief period of eight years at the head of ten thousand devoted followers. At Badr there were only 313 Muslims with him and at Uhud more than double that number, and in the Battle of the Ditch the number grew to several thousand, till at the last Pilgrimage more than one hundred thousand believers marched under his banner. The successes of the Holy Prophet continued after his death. Islam went from strength to strength till it spread, within a few decades, over a large part of the then known world.

The reference in the verse may also be to the latter days when the renaissance of Islam was to take place. The verse may also mean that Divine Reformers will continue to

appear among Muslims during periods of decline to impart to the Faith a new life and a new vigour.

4765A. Commentary:

The *Sūrah* being one of the earliest revelations received at a time when those who had responded to the Call of the Holy Prophet could be counted on one's fingers, the verse under comment contains a message of hope and good cheer wherein the Prophet is told that the time is fast approaching when his cause will triumph and he will be blessed with Divine favours—in this life and the Hereafter—to his heart's content.

4766. Important Words:

يتيم (orphan) is derived from يَتَمُّ (yatama) which means, he became fatherless, an orphan; was or became unique; incomparable; (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The Holy Prophet was an orphan in fact, as well as figuratively. His orphanhood was of the extreme kind. His father died before he was born, leaving no property. His mother died when he was hardly six years old and

8. And He found thee wandering in search of *Him* and guided thee *unto Himself*.⁴⁷⁶⁷

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ ۝٨

9. And He found thee in want and enriched *thee*.⁴⁷⁶⁸

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ ۝٩

his grandfather ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib, who took charge of him after his mother’s death, died two years later, leaving him under the care of his uncle, a man of scanty means. Thus the Prophet was deprived of parental care and love in his early childhood. Yet he received love and affection from his juniors and seniors, his Companions and compatriots in a large measure such that no woman-born had ever received the like of it before or after him or is likely to receive in future.

4767. Important Words:

ضال (wandering) is derived from ضل which means, he erred or went astray; he was perplexed and was unable to see the right course; he was entirely engrossed or was lost in the love of a thing; he wandered in search of a thing and persevered in the search. ضل الماء في اللبن means, the water became hidden in the milk, etc. (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary:

In view of different meanings of the word ضل given above under Important Words, the verse may be interpreted thus: (1) The Holy Prophet wandered in search of the ways and means to attain to God, and God revealed to him the law which guided him to the desired goal. (2) He was perplexed and did not know how to find the

path that led to the attainment of his quest and God guided him to it (42:53). (3) He was entirely lost in the love of God and did not know how to find Him but God led him to Himself (12:9). (4) He was hidden from the eyes of the world. God discovered him and chose him for the task of leading people to Him. Thus the word ضال has not been used in disapprobation but in praise of the Holy Prophet. The word in the sense of 'gone astray' does not and cannot apply to the Holy Prophet since according to another Quranic verse (53:3) he was immune to error or going astray. Moreover, the six concluding verses of the *Sūrah* reveal a certain sequence—vv. 7, 8 & 9 standing in close relationship and corresponding to vv. 10, 11 & 12 respectively; the ضال of verse 8 being substituted by سائل of verse 11, explains the significance of the former word which is, "one who sought God’s help to be guided to Him."

The verse may also be interpreted as: And He found thee lost in thy love for thy people, and provided thee with guidance for them.

4768. Important Words:

عائل (one in want) is derived from عال. They say عال الرجل i.e. the man had a large family to support; he became poor. عال عياله means, he fed,

10. So the orphan, oppress not,

فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ۝١٠

11. And him who seeks *thy*
help, ^achide not,

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ ۝١١

12. And the bounty of thy Lord, ^ع
proclaim. **4769**

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ۝١٢

^a17:24

nourished or supported his family. عَالَ means, the thing oppressed or distressed such a one (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The Holy Prophet started life as a poor orphan but ended by being the undisputed master of the whole of Arabia.

4769. Commentary:

Verses 7, 8 & 9, speak of God's favours on the Holy Prophet and in vv. 10, 11 and 12, the Prophet is enjoined to show his gratitude for Divine favours by doing similar favours to his fellow beings. The commandment applies equally to his followers.

CHAPTER 94

AL-INSHIRĀḤ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introductory Remarks

Since the *Sūrah* is closely connected with the one preceding it so as to form an extension of the subject matter of the latter *Sūrah*, it was obviously revealed at Mecca, about the same time as the other *Sūrah*, i.e. in the second or third year of the Call. Whereas the preceding *Sūrah* spoke of the increasing prosperity of the Holy Prophet's cause, the present *Sūrah* alludes to some distinguishing signs and marks which constitute a sure guarantee of the ultimate triumph of a mission. First of all, one should be firmly convinced of the truth of one's claim and should possess necessary means for propagating it; one should be able to attract people's attention, and the Divine decree should be working in his favour. In the *Sūrah* under comment, the Holy Prophet is described as being in possession of all these in full measure. His cause is, therefore, bound to prevail.



(AL-INSHIRĀḤ)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Have We not opened for thee thy bosom,⁴⁷⁷⁰

أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ②

3. And removed from thee thy burden

وَوَضَعْنَا عَنْكَ وِزْرَكَ ③

4. Which had *well-nigh* broken thy back,⁴⁷⁷¹

الَّذِي أَنْقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ ④

^aSee 1:1.

4770. Important Words:

شرح (opened). شرح المسألة means, he explained the question. شرح الكلام means, he understood the talk. شرح الشيء means, he guarded the thing, he preserved it. شرح صدره للشئ means, he was pleased with the thing. The breast symbolically being the seat of knowledge and feelings, its expansion (in the present context) signifies its illumination with wisdom, divine light and peace and its vastness for the reception of what was to be revealed to the Holy Prophet (Lane, Aqrab & Muḥīṭ).

Commentary:

In view of different meanings of the word شرح, the verse may have one or all of the following interpretations: (1) God had protected the heart of the Holy Prophet from all harmful influences. It was impossible for evil to enter it. (2) God was the Prophet's own Preceptor and Teacher and besides temporal knowledge He had opened his breast to comprehend the

divine mysteries. (3) The Prophet never suffered from straitness of the heart and was endowed with patience and fortitude to such a degree that even the hardest tribulation could not disturb his peace of mind.

4771. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet had been saddled with such a nerve-racking and back-breaking task as had never been entrusted to a human being, i.e. first to raise a degenerate people from the depths of moral turpitude to the peaks of spiritual excellence and, then through them to cleanse and purify the whole of mankind of the dross of iniquity, ignorance and superstition. This was indeed a very heavy responsibility which had almost crushed the Prophet under its weight, but God lightened his burden in that He gave him devoted and sincere Companions who shared his burden and helped him in the discharge of his manifold and hard duties.

5. And We exalted thy name?⁴⁷⁷²

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ۖ

6. Surely, there is ease after hardship.⁴⁷⁷³

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۖ

7. *Aye*, surely, there is ease after hardship.⁴⁷⁷⁴

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۖ

8. So when thou art free from thy immediate task, strive hard,

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ ۖ

9. ^aAnd to thy Lord do thou turn with full attention.⁴⁷⁷⁵

عِ

وَالِى رَّبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ ۚ

^a73:9; 110:4.

4772. Commentary:

The *Sūrah* was revealed in the second or third year of the Call, at a time when the Prophet was hardly known outside his immediate neighbourhood, but very soon he rose to be the best known and most respected and successful of all religious teachers. No leader, religious or temporal, has so commanded the love and respect of his followers as has the Holy Prophet.

4773. Commentary:

The verse holds a message of hope and good cheer for the Holy Prophet. He is comforted with the assurance that whenever Islam would be in difficulty, God would raise a Reformer from among his followers who would restore to it its former glory and greatness. Pointing out the fact that one has to face difficulties and hardships in this life, the Prophet is assured that his tribulation would prove to be of short duration and would soon be followed by increasing ease, success and prosperity.

4774. Commentary:

Repetition of the words, "Surely, there is ease after hardship," signifies that Islam will have to pass through very hard times but on two occasions it will have to face a challenge to its very existence, first at its birth and then in the latter days,—and on both these occasions it will emerge from the ordeal with renewed strength. These verses also indicate that the hardships with which the Holy Prophet and Muslims are faced are temporary, but his successes would be permanent and ever-expanding.

4775. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is told here that as endless vistas of spiritual progress lie before him, after he has conquered the difficulties that bar his way, he should not rest satisfied with his success, but having scaled one peak he should strive to climb the next, and his attention should be wholly directed towards regenerating the fallen humanity and towards establishing God's kingdom on earth.

The verse may also signify that when the Prophet has finished his day's work of teaching and training his followers and other temporal affairs,	he should turn to God as ever with all his heart, for his spiritual journey knows no end.
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CHAPTER 95

AT-TĪN

(Revealed before Hijrah)

General Remarks

This is an early Meccan *Sūrah*. That is the view of ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Abbās and Ibn Zubair. Nöldeke places it after chapter 85.

In the preceding *Sūrah* arguments based on reason and common sense were given in support of the claim that the Holy Prophet’s future would be very glorious as he possessed all those qualities which are necessary for making a success of one’s mission. In the present *Sūrah* examples of some Divine Messengers have been cited to show that as the Holy Prophet’s circumstances resembled the circumstances of these Messengers, therefore, like them he too will achieve success. In chapters 89-94 the Holy Prophet’s Migration to Medina and his subsequent success were hinted at in one form or another—in some by implication, in others by oblique references, and in yet others in clear words. In the *Sūrah* under comment it is hinted that the former Prophets also had to leave their homes for the sake of their missions.



(AT-TĪN)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.⁴⁷⁷⁶

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the Fig and the Olive,

وَالَّتَيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونَ ②

3. *And* by ^bMount Sinai.⁴⁷⁷⁷

وَطُورِ سَيْنِينَ ③

4. *And* by this City of Security^c,⁴⁷⁷⁸

وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b52:2. ^c90:2.

4776. Commentary:

See 1:1.

4777. Commentary:

See next verse. The word سينين being in the plural shows that there are several mountains of this name in that region. On one of these God manifested Himself to Moses.

4778. Commentary:

The Fig, the Olive, Mount Sinai and "this City of Security" have been invoked as witnesses to support and substantiate the claim made in the *Sūrah* that the Holy Prophet will succeed in his mission. Various views have been expressed as to what is meant by these things and how they support the above-mentioned claim. Here are some of these views:

1. "The Fig" and "the Olive" are symbolic of Jesus, "Mount Sinai" of Moses; and "this City of Security" of the Holy Prophet. These three verses together point to the well-known Biblical reference, viz. "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from

Seir with them; and He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints: from His right hand went a fiery law for them. (Deut. 33:2).

2. "The Fig" is symbolic of the Mosaic Dispensation and "the Olive" of the Islamic Dispensation. In the Bible good people and the bad among the Israelites have been likened to two baskets of good and bad figs (Jer. chap. 24:1-5); and in the Quran Islamic teaching has been likened to "the oil of a blessed olive tree which is neither of the East nor of the West" (24:36). This simile has been further expressed in more concrete form by the words "Mount Sinai" and "this City of Security." The simile is very apt, since "the Fig" and "the Olive" are both used as medicines and as articles of food, with this difference that the former tastes sweet but rots very soon while the latter is used as fruit, its oil is in general use and when mixed with condiments it preserves and protects pickled articles

5. Surely, We have created man
in "the best make";⁴⁷⁷⁹

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي
أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ۝

^a23:13-15.

from rotting and decaying.

3. According to some commentators "the Fig" stands for Buddhism, "the Olive" for Christianity, "Mount Sinai" for Judaism and "this City of Security" for the Holy Prophet of Islam.

4. But perhaps the best explanation of the symbolism used in these verses is the one according to which the four words represent four periods in the history of human evolution, "the Fig" representing the era of Adam, "the Olive" that of Noah, "Mount Sinai" that of Moses and "this City of Security" the Islamic epoch. This explanation finds ample support from the Bible and the Quran. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit and found themselves naked, they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons (Gen. 3:7). About Noah we read: "And the dove came in to him in the evening; and lo! in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off; so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth" (Gen. 8:11) And it is an accepted fact that Moses received the Divine Law on Mount Sinai and that Mecca, the birthplace of Islam was, from time immemorial, regarded as, and proved to be, the "City of Security." These four periods represent the four cycles through which man had to pass to reach the stage of complete development. In the cycle of Adam the foundations of human civilization were laid. Noah

was the founder of the Sharī'ah. In the cycle of Moses the details of the Sharī'ah were revealed, while with the advent of the Holy Prophet the Divine Law became complete and perfect in all its manifold aspects, and man attained his complete intellectual, social, moral and spiritual development.

The verse signifies that the circumstances of the Holy Prophet resemble those of Adam, Noah and Moses. Like them he will suffer hardships in the beginning and like them will succeed in the end.

4779. Important Words:

تقويم (make, formation or build) is inf. noun from قوم. They say قوم الأمر i.e. he managed the affair well. قوم الشيء means, he set the thing right or made it straight or even (Aqrab & Lane).

Commentary:

The verse may mean:

1. Man has been endowed with the best natural powers and qualities, by making use of which he can make infinite progress.

2. God has endowed man with a creative power, i.e. he can be a good architect and builder in both the physical and spiritual senses.

The question naturally arises: When man has been endowed with such wonderful natural powers and capacities, why does he sin? Various schools have their own explanations for this baffling question. According

6. Then, *if he acts unjustly*, We degrade him as the lowest of the low,⁴⁷⁸⁰

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ ﴿٦﴾

7. "Save those who believe and do good works; so for them is an unfailing reward.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٧﴾

^a11:12; 41:9; 84:26.

to one school man is prone to evil, though he has also been endowed with the power to correct and reform himself. This is the Buddhist conception of evil. (ii) According to Christian belief man is by nature sinful, because Adam faltered and committed a sin, and his progeny inherited the taint of sin from their progenitor. (iii) The third school holds the view that man is not born with a good or bad nature. He comes into the world with some natural inclinations and instinctive impulses and it is the sort of education which he gets or the atmosphere in which he moves that make him good or bad. Some mystics hold the view that man is deprived of all freedom of will or action and is completely denied discretion or volition and that he is a helpless victim of predetermined set of conditions and circumstances which he cannot overcome. (iv) The protagonists of the theory of transmigration of souls are of the view that man is born to suffer for the evil deeds he does in a former existence and goes through various forms of rebirth to cleanse himself of his sins. All these views evidently contravene human reason and offend against his moral sense. According to

Islam, however, man is born with a pure and unsullied nature, with a natural tendency to do good, but he has also been given a large measure of freedom of will and action to mould himself as he chooses. He has been endowed with great natural powers and qualities to make unlimited moral progress and to rise spiritually so high as to become the mirror in which Divine attributes are reflected. But if he misuses God-given powers and attributes, he sinks lower than even beasts and brutes and becomes the Devil incarnate as the next verse shows. Briefly, the verse signifies that man is blessed with great potentialities for good or evil.

4780. Commentary:

If "man" is taken to mean the whole mankind the verse signifies that good precedes evil. This is Islam's main difference with the protagonists of the theory of man's moral evolution, according to whom evil precedes good. If man is taken as an individual the verse means that God has bestowed upon man great natural faculties and powers and has revealed guidance in order that by making right use of them and following Divinely-revealed guidance he might reach the high destiny intended for him.

8. Then what is there to give the lie to thee, after *this*, with regard to the judgement?⁴⁷⁸¹

فَمَا يَكْذِبُكَ بَعْدَ الدِّينِ ط

9. Is not Allah the Best of Judges?

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمَ الْحَكَمِينَ ع

4781. Important Words:

دين (judgement) is inf. noun from دان which means, he obeyed. دين means, judgement; religion; compulsion against will; righteousness; argument; plan, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that when man has been created to achieve a very high spiritual destiny and God sent His Messengers such as Adam, Noah, Moses and the Holy Prophet, to help him achieve his great goal and that if he does not make proper use of his natural faculties and rejects the Divine Message, opposing God's Messengers he is punished, then, who can, with reason, deny that there is a Day of Judgement in this life and in the Hereafter, and that the commandments of God Who is the Best of Judges cannot be defied with impunity and man's actions will not go unrequited. This is the simple explanation of this verse. But in view of the different significations of the word دين given under Important Words, the verse may also mean:

(1) How can the pagan Quraish,

after having seen the evil end to which opponents of God's Messengers always come, possibly hope that they will escape God's judgement and will not be punished and the Holy Prophet will not succeed?

(2) When God has been revealing the Sharī'ah from time immemorial, then why do disbelievers find fault with the Holy Prophet, if he has brought a new Law?

(3) The disbelievers can advance no sane or solid argument against the claim of the Holy Prophet. Any charge or objection they raise against him equally applies to all Divine Messengers.

(4) In view of the innumerable signs shown in favour of the Holy Prophet, no plan or argument can succeed against him or can disprove his claim.

(5) No truly righteous man can reject the Holy Prophet.

(6) After having known the tragic end of the opponents of God's Messengers who will dare say that he can compel the Holy Prophet to give up his mission?

CHAPTER 96

AL-‘ALAQ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Date of Revelation and Context

The first five verses of the *Sūrah* have been universally admitted to be the first revelation which descended upon the Holy Prophet in Cave Ḥirā’, on a night in the month of Ramadan, 13th years before Hijrah, corresponding to 610 A.D. On that "Night of Destiny" when the Prophet lay on the floor of the Cave, his mind locked in deep contemplation, these verses were revealed and the words became branded on his soul. "These blessed verses," says Ibn Kathīr, "are the first act of mercy with which God blessed His servants." After the first revelation some verses of *Sūrah* Al-Qalam are said to have been revealed, followed by some verses of *Sūrah* Al-Muzzammil. Then there occurred a break of a year or so after which revelation started coming in quick succession.

The connection of this *Sūrah* with the one preceding it consists in the fact that in that *Sūrah* it was stated that from time immemorial, in order to meet the need of the age, God had been sending His Messengers and Prophets and had been revealing His will to them. First came Adam who was followed by Prophet Noah, and after a succession of Divine Messengers, appeared Moses, the greatest of the Israelite Prophets, and last of all came the Holy Prophet. In the *Sūrah* under comment it is stated that just as the birth of man is the result of a gradual process of development, so is his spiritual evolution. The Prophets whose examples were cited in the preceding *Sūrah* attained to different stages of spiritual development, but the Holy Prophet represents in his person the best specimen of man’s complete spiritual evolution.

Incidentally, one possible objection relating to the revelation of this *Sūrah* and its place in the existing order of the *Sūrahs* of the Quran, may be removed here. It may well be asked, if this *Sūrah* was revealed long before the one preceding it, why it should have been placed after the latter *Sūrah*? The answer is that it is an outstanding miracle of the Quran that it was revealed in an order which was best suited for the needs of the period during which it was revealed and was arranged for permanent use in the existing order which was best suited for the needs of coming generations till the end of time. That is why the present *Sūrah*, some of whose verses were the first to be revealed, finds a place among the last few chapters of the Quran.



(AL-'ALAQ)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bProclaim thou in the name of thy Lord Who created, **4782**

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ②

3. Created man from a clot of blood. **4783**

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b23:15; 40:68; 75:39.

4782. Important Words:

اقْرَأ (proclaim) is derived from قرء which means, he collected together the thing; put it together part to part. قرأت القرآن means, I recited or read the Quran uninterruptedly or recited it chanting (syn. أنشد). قرء عليه القرآن means, he read or recited to him the Quran. قرأ عليه السلام means, he conveyed or delivered to him the salutation. Thus اقرأ means, read, recite, convey, proclaim or collect (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The very first word of the verse shows that the Quran was meant to be read and proclaimed, to be collected and put together and conveyed to the whole world. Moreover, the verse embodies a prophecy that the Quran will be written and repeatedly read and recited. It is an undeniable fact of history that as soon as a portion of the Quran was revealed it was committed to writing and that among all religious Scriptures the Quran is the most widely read. The mention in the verse of the Divine attribute رب (the Lord) Who cherishes and sustains man through all the different stages of

his development signifies that the spiritual development of man was to be gradual and in stages till it was to find its full consummation in the Holy Prophet.

4783. Important Words:

علق (clot of blood) is inf. noun from علق ('aliqa). They say علق به i.e. it hung to it, clung, clave or stuck fast to it; it concerned him or it. علقها او علق بها means, he loved her. علق means, a clot of blood; love (Lane & Aqrab). خلق من علق is an Arabic phrase meaning, love forms a part of his nature; it is ingrained in his nature. See also 21:38 & 30:55.

Commentary:

The verse signifies that love of God is ingrained in the nature of man, and that it was natural that there should have been someone in whom this instinctive impulse should find its completest manifestation. This was the Holy Prophet who loved his Creator with all his mind, heart and soul. The verse also signifies that as man's physical development is gradual, so is his spiritual development, and this gradual

4. Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Generous,⁴⁷⁸⁴

اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝٤

5. Who taught by the pen,⁴⁷⁸⁵

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝٥

6. "Taught man what he knew not."⁴⁷⁸⁶

عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝٦

7. Nay! man does indeed transgress^b,⁴⁷⁸⁷

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَيَطْغَىٰ ۝٧

8. Because he thinks himself to be independent.

أَن رَّاهُ اسْتَغْنَىٰ ۝٨

^a4:114; 55:5. ^b37:31.

development culminated in the Holy Prophet.

4784. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the more the Quran is read and proclaimed to the world, the more the Holiness of God and the dignity of man will be recognised and appreciated. The verse may also imply a prophecy that through the reading, preaching and proclaiming of the Quran a place of great honour will accrue to the Holy Prophet and his followers.

4785. Commentary:

This verse also embodies a prophecy that the "pen" would play a great part in committing the Quran to writing and in preserving and protecting it from being lost or interfered with. It further refers to the great contribution that "the pen" was to make towards the propagation and dissemination of spiritual sciences and the divine secrets revealed by the Quran and of the physical sciences to which the study of the Quran imparted a great stimulus. It is really

very significant that frequent mention should have been made of "pen" in a Book which was revealed among a people who had no respect for, and made rare use of it, and which was revealed to a person who himself did not know how to read and write.

4786. Commentary:

Not even one hundredth part of what the Quran has taught about Divine Unity, Revelation, Angels, life after death, Ethics, and other kindred subjects is to be found in any other revealed Scripture.

4787. Commentary:

The particle لَا is sometimes used to impart emphasis and is expressive of certainty. Or it is used in the sense of 'nay' or 'never'. The verse means that though man has been endowed with great natural powers and has been created in the best make, he errs grievously if he thinks that he can ignore God's help and guidance. He constantly stands in need of Divine assistance because his capacities and capabilities are at best limited.

9. Surely, unto thy Lord is the return.^a

إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَىٰ ۖ

10. Hast thou seen him who forbids^b

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يَنْهَىٰ

11. A servant of Ours when he prays?⁴⁷⁸⁸

عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّىٰ ۖ

12. Tell me if he (Our servant) follows the guidance

أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ الْهُدَىٰ

13. Or enjoins righteousness, what will be the end of the forbidders?

أَوْ أَمَرَ بِالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ

14. Tell me if he (the forbidders) rejects and turns his back,⁴⁷⁸⁹

أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ۖ

15. 'Does he not know that Allah sees him?

أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَىٰ ۖ

16. Nay, if he desist not, We will assuredly seize and drag him by the forelock ,⁴⁷⁹⁰

كَلَّا لَئِنْ لَّمْ يَنْتَهِ لَنَسْفَعًا بِالنَّاصِيَةِ ۖ

^a5:49; 21:36; 53:43. ^b2:115; 72:20. ^c90:8.

4788. Commentary:

The verse is of general application. But it may in particular refer to the Holy Prophet.

4789. Commentary:

كذب (rejects) relates to beliefs and تولى (turns his back) to actions and deeds, meaning that his beliefs are wrong and his deeds bad.

4790. Important Words:

نسفعاً (we shall seize him and drag him). سفعه means, he made a mark upon it with hot iron; he struck or slapped his face. سفع بناصيته means, he seized his forelock and dragged him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verses (10-18) though generally applying to every haughty and hardened disbeliever, have been taken by some commentators to refer particularly to Abū Jahl, leader of the Quraish of Mecca. He was in the forefront in annoying, opposing and persecuting the Holy Prophet and the Muslims. Some of the slaves who had embraced Islam were dragged at his instance by the forelock in the streets of Mecca. After the defeat at Badr, the dead bodies of some of the leaders of the Quraish, Abū Jahl among them, were dragged by their forelocks and thrown into a pit dug

17. A forelock, lying, sinful.

نَاصِيَةٍ كَاذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ ﴿١٧﴾

18. Then let him call his associates,⁴⁷⁹¹

فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ ﴿١٨﴾

19. We too will call *Our* angels of punishment.⁴⁷⁹²

سَنَدْعُ الزَّبَانِيَةَ ﴿١٩﴾

20. Nay, yield not thou to him, but ^aprostrate thyself and draw near to Allah.

كَلَّا لَا تَطِيعُہُ وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ ﴿٢٠﴾

^a3:44; 22:78; 41:38.

for that purpose. That was a fit punishment for the treatment they had meted out to the helpless Muslims years before at Mecca.

4791. Important Words:

نادى (associates) is derived from نادى. They say نادى القوم the people gathered and came to the meeting. نادى or نادى means, an assembly (Aqrab).

4792. Important Words:

زبانية (angels of punishment) is the

plural of زبينة which is derived from زين. They say زينہ he pushed or thrust it, or thrust it away. زينت الناقة means, the she-camel pushed away the milker on the occasion of being milked. زبانية means, armed attendants or officers or soldiers or the prefect of police (syn. شرطة); angels or guards of hell because they push the sinners into it; angels of punishment (Lane & Aqrab).

CHAPTER 97

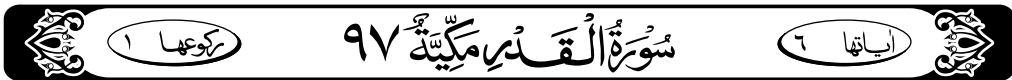
AL-QADR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

Some commentators of the Quran think that this *Sūrah* was revealed at Medina. This, however, is a mistaken opinion, being against all historical data. Al-Qadr is definitely a Meccan *Sūrah* and belongs to the very early phase of the Call. Such eminent and respected authorities as Ibn ‘Abbās, Ibn Zubair and ‘Ā’ishah subscribe to this view. Nöldeke places it after chapter 91, which was one of the earliest *Sūrahs* revealed at Mecca.

The preceding *Sūrah* had opened with the Divine command to the Prophet to recite the Quran and preach and proclaim its Message to the world. The present *Sūrah* deals with the high status, dignity and excellence of the Quran, which is declared in the opening verse to have been revealed in "*Lailatul-Qadr*" i.e. the Night of Destiny, Decree or Dignity. This Night of Destiny or Decree, has been described, elsewhere in the Quran, as the Blessed Night (44:4). The *Sūrah* has only five little verses, excluding the *Bisimillah* and yet its meaning and content is of deep spiritual significance.



(AL-QADR)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Surely, We sent it down on the Night of Destiny^b. 4793

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ②

^aSee 1:1. ^b44:4.

4793. Important Words:

قدر (Destiny) is derived from قدر (qadara). They say قدر الشيء i.e. he measured or decreed the things; he thought upon the thing or affair and considered its issue, or result and compared one part of it with another; he estimated, honoured or magnified the thing. قدرت على الشيء means, I had power or ability to do the thing. قدر means, measure, limit or number; value, worth, greatness; dignity, majesty; power; decree or destiny, ordinance (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Generally ليل and ليلة mean the same thing, i.e. night, but according to the famous lexicographer, Marzūqī, ليل is used as opposed to هاء as opposed to ليلة like علامة and نسيابة is expressive of exaggeration, and possesses a wider and more extensive meaning than ليل as يوم which is its opposite has a wider sense than هاء which is opposite of ليل. The word ليلة has been used as many as eight times in the Quran (2:52; 2:188; 44:4; twice in 7:143 & three times in the verse under comment), and everywhere it has been used in connection with the revelation of the Quran and other

kindred subjects. It thus points to the dignity, majesty and greatness of those nights in which the Quran was revealed. In view of different meanings of قدر given under Important Words and of the significance of the word ليلة the present verse may be interpreted as follows:

1. We have revealed the Quran in the night which We had specifically set apart for the manifestation of Our special powers, i.e. We have revealed the Quran at a time about which prophecies were to be found in previous Scriptures.

2. We have revealed it in a night which is equal in worth to all the other nights put together, i.e. this one night is equal in worth to the life of the whole of humanity.

3. We have revealed it in a night of dignity, majesty and honour, i.e. the Quranic teaching is too dignified to be successfully assailed.

4. We have revealed it in the night of sufficiency, i.e. the Quran fully meets all moral and spiritual human needs and requirements so as to render man independent of all other scriptures.

5. We have revealed it in the Night

3. And what should make thee know what the Night of Destiny is?⁴⁷⁹⁴

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ۖ

4. The Night of Destiny is better than a thousand months.⁴⁷⁹⁵

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ۚ

of Decree or Destiny, i.e. the Quran was revealed at a time when man's destiny was decreed, the future pattern of the universe was settled, and right principles of guidance for humanity were laid down for all time to come. The time of the appearance of a great Divine Reformer is also called ليلة القدر because at that time sin and vice hold widespread sway and the powers of darkness reign supreme. It has also been taken to mean the particular night among the odd nights in the last ten days of Ramadan when the Quran first began to be revealed. Or it may signify the whole period of 23 years of the Holy Prophet's ministry when the Quran gradually was being revealed.

4794. Commentary:

The verse means that the blessings of the Night of Destiny are beyond count or calculation.

4795. Commentary:

ألف (a thousand) being the highest number of count in Arabic signifies a number beyond count, and the verse means, that the Night of Destiny is better than countless number of months, i.e. the period of the Holy Prophet is infinitely better and superior to all other periods put together. Or the verse may signify

that the sacrifices which the Muslims were required to make at Mecca in the night of their distress and agony which had taken out of their lives all light and happiness, were infinitely greater than those sacrifices which they made afterwards.

The word شهر also means a learned man. The verse in this sense may signify that the mysteries of spiritual sciences and heavenly knowledge which will be revealed in the Book which is being revealed in the Night of Decree are greater in quantity and superior in quality than the knowledge produced by the concerted and combined efforts of all learned men.

The verse, however, embodies an allusion to the appearance of Divine Reformers among the Muslims when they would stand in need of them. One thousand months roughly make one century and the Holy Prophet is reported to have said that God would continue to raise from among his followers, at the head of every century, a Reformer who would regenerate Islam and give it new life and new vigour (Mājah). Thus ليلة القدر (Night of Destiny) may signify the period of each one of these Divine Reformers.

5. Therein descend angels^a and the Spirit by the command of their Lord with Divine decree concerning every matter^b.**4796**

تَنْزِلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا
بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ۝
عند المسبحين

6. *It is all* peace till the rising of the dawn.**4797**

سَلَامٌ ۙ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ۝
ع

^a16:3; 40:16. ^b44:5.

4796. Commentary:

الروح here signifies a new spirit, awakening, zeal and determination. The verse purports to say that in the Night of Destiny the angels of God descend to help the Divine Messenger or Reformer to promote and further the cause of truth and that his followers are inspired with a new life, a new spirit and a new awakening, to spread and propagate the Divine Message.

The expression من كل أمر signifies that the angels of God descend to meet and satisfy every religious need and to remove all obstacles and impediments from the way of the expansion and spread of the new Message.

4797. Commentary:

The word سلام (peace) stands for a complete sentence meaning, "it is all peace." In the time of a Prophet or Divine Reformer a peculiar kind of mental peace or equanimity descends upon the believers amidst hardships and privations. The heavenly happiness which inspires believers at that time transcends all material and sensuous joys.

The expression مطلع الفجر means, the passing of the night of hardships and the rising of the dawn of predominance and ascendancy of the cause of truth.

CHAPTER 98

AL-BAYYINAH

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

Scholars differ about the time of revelation of this *Sūrah*. Ibn Marduwh reports that ‘Ā’ishah, the talented wife of the Holy Prophet, said that it was revealed at Mecca, while according to Ibn ‘Abbās, as reported by the same authority, it was revealed in the early Medinite period. After taking all relevant facts into consideration, the majority of scholars have adhered to the view attributed to ‘Ā’ishah.

The preceding several *Sūrahs* had dealt with the important subject of revelation of the Quran and its incomparable beauty and excellence. The present *Sūrah*, however, deals with the change that the Quran was intended to bring about. At the very outset, it states that the People of the Book and the idolaters would have continued to grope in the dark and to live a life of sin and iniquity if the Quran had not been revealed. It is the Holy Prophet who brought them out of the darkness of doubt and disbelief and led them to the path of right beliefs and righteous deeds.



(AL-BAYYINAH)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Those who disbelieve from among the People of the Book and the idolaters would not desist from *disbelief* until there came to them the ^bclear evidence—⁴⁷⁹⁸

لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ
وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ مُنْفَكِّينَ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ
الْبَيِّنَةُ ②

3. A Messenger from Allah, reciting *unto them the pure Scriptures*^c,⁴⁷⁹⁹

رَسُولٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ يَتْلُو صُحُفًا مُّطَهَّرَةً ③

4. Wherein are lasting commandments.⁴⁸⁰⁰

فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِيمَةٌ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b16:34. ^c3:165; 62:3; 87:19.

4798. Important Words:

انفك is derived from انفك. They say انفك الشيء عن الشيء i.e. the thing became separated from another thing. ما انفك means, he continued to do so or did not cease to do so or did not desist from doing so (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The Quran has divided all disbelievers into two categories—the People of the Book and the idolaters, i.e. those who do not believe in any revealed Scripture. The verse purports to say that before the advent of the Holy Prophet those who had received revealed guidance as well as those who were complete strangers to it were all sunk in immorality and iniquity and had held false beliefs and wrong ideals and principles, and that

if the Holy Prophet had not come and the Quran had not been revealed, they would have continued to flounder in darkness. It is to this universal moral decline that the Quran has referred in the words الظاهر الفساد في البر والبحر i.e. corruption had appeared on land and on sea (30:42).

4799. Commentary:

The expression رسول من الله is case in apposition with the word البينة in the preceding verse. The word مطهرة (pure) signifies that the Quran is completely free from all possible flaws, blemishes or defects. It possesses, on the contrary all conceivable beauty and excellence.

4800. Important Words:

قام (lasting) is derived from قام. They say قام بالامر i.e. he managed,

5. And those to whom the Book was given did not become divided^a until after clear evidence had come to them.⁴⁸⁰¹

وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ
بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَةُ ۖ

6. And they were not commanded but to serve Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience,^b and being upright, and to observe Prayer, and pay the Zakāh. And that is the right religion.⁴⁸⁰²

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ
لَهُ الدِّينَ ۖ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ ۖ

^a42:15; 45:18. ^b31:33; 40:15.

conducted or superintended the affair. قومه means, he put it right or made it straight. قيم means, true, perfect; superintendent; guardian (Lane, Mufradāt & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The Quran is the compendium of all that is good, lasting and imperishable in the teachings of former revealed Scriptures, with a good deal more which those Scriptures lack but which man needed for his moral and spiritual development. All those right ideals and principles and ordinances and commandments which were of permanent utility to man have been incorporated in it. The Quran stands, as it were, not only as a guardian over those Books but comprises additional teachings that guard and protect man from moral decline and degeneration and teaches him how to make right use of his God-given faculties.

In the words صحفاً مطهرة (pure Scriptures) stress is laid on the fact

that the Quran has steered clear of all those defects and impurities which were found in the former Scriptures. In the expression دين القيمة (right religion) the emphasis is on those lasting and unalterable teachings which are its exclusive possession.

4801. Commentary:

The verse means to say that the People of the Book had eagerly awaited the coming of a great Prophet about whom clear prophecies were found in their scriptures, but when he appeared in fact, then instead of accepting him they rejected him.

4802. Commentary:

دين (religion) means obedience; mastery; command; plan; righteousness; habit or custom; behaviour or conduct (Lane & Aqrab). The verse may signify:

(1) They should have rendered full and sincere obedience to Divine commandments.

(2) When they got mastery or ascendancy, they should have devoted

7. Verily, those who disbelieve from among the People of the Book and the idolaters will be in the fire of Hell,^a abiding therein. They are the worst of creatures.^b

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ
وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا^ط
أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ^٧

8. Verily, those who believe and do righteous deeds—they are the best of creatures.^c

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ^٨
أُولَئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ^٨

9. Their reward is with their Lord—Gardens of Eternity,^d through which streams flow; they will abide therein forever. Allah is well pleased with Him. That is for him who fears his Lord^e. **4803**

جَزَاءُ وَهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا^ط
أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ^ط
ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ^٩

^a19:69; 21:99. ^b8:56; 95:6. ^c3:199. ^d9:72; 13:24; 16:32; 35:34. ^e36:12; 55:47; 67:13.

all their power and prestige to obtaining God's pleasure.

(3) All their plans should have been directed towards the achievement of the one supreme object—pleasure of God.

(4) Their fear of God and love for Him should have been completely sincere and honest.

(5) They should have imbibed

Divine attributes; and all their friendships and enmities should have been for the sake of God.

4803. Commentary:

The highest stage of spiritual development is reached when man's will becomes completely identified with the Will of God.

CHAPTER 99

AZ-ZILZĀL

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introductory Remarks

Scholars differ about the time of revelation of this *Sūrah*. The majority, including Mujāhid, ‘Aṭā’ and Ibn ‘Abbās, are of the view that it was revealed at Mecca, while others think that it was revealed at Medina. But, taking into consideration all the relevant facts the latter view does not appear to be sound, since, in subject matter, the *Sūrah* resembles its predecessor which is a Meccan *Sūrah*. Whereas in the preceding *Sūrah* mention was made of the great moral revolution that was brought about by the Holy Prophet, in the *Sūrah* under comment we are told that a similar change will take place at a later date, in the time of the Promised Messiah and Mahdī, when all human institutions will be shaken to their foundations, and new discoveries and inventions in the domain of science and knowledge will change the entire shape of things, and the ideals and ideas of men will be given a new orientation.



(AZ-ZILZĀL)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the earth is shaken with her *violent* shaking, ⁴⁸⁰⁴

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا ②

3. And the earth throws up her burdens, ⁴⁸⁰⁵

وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا ③

^aSee 1:1.

4804. Important Words:

زلزل (is shaken). زلزل الله الأرض means, God made the earth to quake violently, or put the earth into a state of convulsion or violent motion. زلزل فلانا means, he frightened such a one and terrified him. زلزل الابل means, he drove the camels with violence or vehemence, means an earthquake, convulsion, commotion or violent agitation; a great calamity (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The expression زلزلت الأرض زلزالها means that the whole earth will experience all manner of internal as well as external commotion and upheavals. In our time not only has the earth been constantly shaken by most destructive earthquakes, wars and other calamities and catastrophes at frequent intervals, but also its dwellers have been subjected to violent and virulent agitation in every walk of life. Man has experienced catastrophic changes never witnessed by him before.

4805. Important Words:

أثقالها (her burdens) is the plural of ثقل which is inf. noun from ثقل (*thaqula*) which means, it was or became heavy, weighty or ponderous, or it became preponderant ideally; it was or became oppressive or grievous. ثقل (*thiqlun*) means, luggage of a traveller; household goods; anything held in high estimate or anything which is in much demand and is preserved; treasure or buried treasure; burden (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse may have one of the following interpretations:

1. The bowels of the earth will be ripped open and it will throw up its treasures of mineral wealth.

2. There will be a vast release and upsurge of knowledge of all kinds, relating to physical as well as spiritual sciences, especially in the sciences of geology and archaeology.

3. People will throw off the yoke of their rulers and religious leaders and will revolt against oppression, throwing the yoke of subjection off their shoulders.

4. And man says, 'What is the matter with her?'⁴⁸⁰⁶

وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا ۚ

5. That day will she tell her news,⁴⁸⁰⁷

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا ۚ

6. For thy Lord will have revealed about her.⁴⁸⁰⁸

بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا ۚ

7. On that day will men come forth in scattered groups that they may be shown *the results* of their works.⁴⁸⁰⁹

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا ۚ

لِّيُرَوْا أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۚ

4806. Commentary:

The changes will be so many and so far reaching and the discoveries made so great that one will exclaim in wonder and bewilderment: "What is the matter with the earth!"

4807. Commentary:

All prophecies concerning the present age will be fulfilled and all that had hitherto remained obscure will become manifest. The verse may also mean that the science of geology will make great strides. When asked about the meaning of the verse, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said that every action done in secret will come to light (Tirmidhī).

4808. Commentary:

At about 65 places in the Quran, excluding the present verse, wherever the word *وحى* has been used, it is followed by the preposition *الى*. In the verse under comment, however, it is followed by the particle *ل* which being synonymous with *في* means, "concerning," and the verse means, the Lord has sent down the revelation

concerning her, the recipient of the revelation—the Holy Prophet—being left unmentioned. The word *أوحى* also means, he commanded. In this sense of the word, the verse would mean that the earth will throw out its treasures because it is commanded by God to do so.

4809. Commentary:

The verse means that in the time of the Promised Messiah, in order to protect and safeguard their political, social and economic interests, people will form themselves into parties, companies and groups. There will be political parties and parties formed on economic basis; and powerful guilds, cartels and syndicates will also come into existence.

The words "that they may be shown the results of their works" signify that individuals will pool their resources, and collective effort will take the place of individual effort in order that they might make their weight felt and their labours might lead to some result.

8. ^aThen whoso does an atom's weight of good will see it,

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ۖ

9. ^bAnd whoso does an atom's weight of evil will *also* see it. **4810**

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ۖ

^a4:124-125; 17:8; 28:85; 41:47. ^b99:8.

4810. Commentary:

The principle that no action of man, good or bad, is wasted and must produce some result, has been explained variously in the Quran.

These two verses contain at once a message of solace and comfort for the righteous, and a warning for the evildoers, that they shall reap the consequences of their actions.

CHAPTER 100

AL-‘ĀDIYĀT

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

A large majority of eminent Muslim scholars, including Jābir, ‘Ikrimah, and ‘Abdullāh bin Mas‘ūd, one of the earliest Companions of the Holy Prophet and a great authority on Quranic chronology, are of the view that the *Sūrah* was revealed very early at Mecca. One or two writers who disagree with this view, therefore, do not count. The *Sūrah* takes its place in point of the time next to the preceding *Sūrah*.

In some of the foregoing *Sūrahs*, the conditions both in the time of the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah as well as the great transformation that was to be brought about by them were simultaneously mentioned, and *Sūrah* Zilzāl had dealt with the great advances in science and knowledge, especially in the science of geology, and with the vast changes that were to take place in the political, social and economic spheres. The present *Sūrah*, deals with the zeal and enthusiasm of the Companions of the Holy Prophet, with their great sacrifices and the battles they fought against unequal odds, in the way of God. The *Sūrah* may also be taken to refer to the mode of fighting in the present age. Some mystics, however, take the *Sūrah*, to refer to the constant war that the righteous believers have to wage against their passions and evil propensities, and to the heavenly light they receive as a result of the successful outcome of that fight.



(AL-'ĀDIYĀT)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the snorting chargers of the warriors, ⁴⁸¹¹

وَالْعَدِيَّتِ ضَبْحًا ②

3. Striking sparks of fire with their hoofs. ⁴⁸¹²

فَالْمُورِيَّتِ قَدْحًا ③

^aSee 1:1.

4811. Important Words:

العاديات (the chargers) is the plural of عادية which is fem. act. part. from عدا which means, he ran vehemently. عدا عليه means, he attacked or assaulted him. عادات means, companies of warriors; horses or chargers of the warriors (Lane & Aqrab).

ضبحاً (snorting) is derived from ضبح which means, he or it uttered a sound or cry. They say ضبحت الخيل في العدو i.e. the horses breathed pantingly or hard with a sound from the chest when running fast, or breathed hard or laboriously when running a race and fatigued; they snorted. ضبح (ḍabḥun) is a kind of race of the animals, particularly of the horses; the sound coming out of the chest of a horse when it runs fast and breathes laboriously; running of the horse with long strides. (Lane & Mufradāt).

Commentary:

How dear to God must be those fighters who wage relentless war against the forces of evil that He has sworn by them or even by their horses. The verse speaks volumes for the zeal and enthusiasm of the

Companions of the Holy Prophet to fight and give up their lives in the way of God. It says that they march to the field of battle with extreme delight and zeal to score a victory or be killed in the way of Allah and thus obtain His pleasure which is their most coveted goal in life. The verse also refers admiringly to the swiftness of movement of their chargers and the suddenness of their assault.

The verse was revealed in Mecca at a time when Muslims had no horses. In the Battle of Badr, there were only two horses with the Muslim army, one belonging to Miqdād and the other to Zubair. The verse, in fact, constituted a prophecy that soon the Muslims will have horses. It also was a command to them to have cavalry along with infantry.

4812. Important Words:

الموريات (striking) is fem. act. part. from أورى الأورى i.e. he produced fire from the piece of wood called زند. قدح النار means, he struck or produced fire with a flint (Lane & Aqrab).

4. And making raids at dawn.⁴⁸¹³

فَالْمَغِيرَاتِ صُبْحًا ۝

5. And raising clouds of dust thereby,⁴⁸¹⁴

فَأَثَرُنَ بِهِ نَقْعًا ۝

6. And penetrating thereby into the centre of *the enemy* forces,⁴⁸¹⁵

فَوَسَّطْنَ بِهِ جَمْعًا ۝

Commentary:

The chargers of Muslim warriors run so fast that they produce sparks of fire when they strike their hoofs against the ground. The allusion in the verse is to the eagerness and zeal of the Muslim warriors to fight in the way of God.

4813. Important Words:

المغيرات (making raids) is the plural of مغيرة which is fem. act. part. from أغار which is the transitive form of غار. They say غار في الامر i.e. he remained deeply engaged into the affair. أغار means, he went far into the country. أغار الفرس means, the horse ran vehemently and was quick in sudden attack. أغار على العدو means, he made a sudden raid upon the enemy. خيل مغيرة means, horses making a sudden attack upon the enemy. مغيرات means, companies that go far into the country; that make a swift and sudden attack upon the enemy (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse mentions one more characteristic of the brave Muslim warriors. They do not take undue advantage of the neglect and unwariness of the enemy by attacking them at night. They attack them in the full glare of the dawn. The verse

shows that Muslims are brave and clean fighters.

4814. Important Words:

أثرن (raise) is transitive verb from أثار. They say أثار الغبار means, the dust became stirred up and spread upon the horizon. أثار الارض means, he tilled the ground. أثار الفتنة means, he stirred up the mischief (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The assault of the Muslim forces is so fierce and overwhelming that the whole horizon becomes dark with the dust raised by the quick steps of their horses.

4815. Commentary:

Muslim warriors do not attack single individuals or weak helpless women, children or old men, but they attack in a body the whole enemy force and penetrate far into the heart of their ranks.

The reference in these verses (2-6) may also be to those God-intoxicated spiritual wayfarers who constantly and relentlessly are engaged in fighting the forces of evil and in making strenuous efforts to get nearness to God and by their noble efforts cause a heavenly light to burn in them; and when by the light of Divine realization they acquire the

7. Surely, man is ungrateful to his Lord;⁴⁸¹⁶

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٧﴾

8. And surely, he bears witness to it *by his conduct* that;⁴⁸¹⁷

وَإِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾

9. And surely, in his love of wealth he is violent.^a

وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٩﴾

10. Does not such a one know that when those in the graves are raised^b,⁴⁸¹⁸

أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿١٠﴾

11. And that which is *hidden* in the breasts is brought forth,⁴⁸¹⁹

وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِي الصُّدُورِ ﴿١١﴾

^a89:21. ^b82:5.

capability to detect their own shortcomings and those of others, they make a vehement attack on them. Their next stage in this spiritual journey is reached when they pour out the agony of their hearts before their Creator and invoke His grace and mercy by prayer and devotional cries. These are the persons who succeed in obtaining their great object.

4816. Important Words:

كنود (ungrateful) is derived from كند. They say كند النعمة i.e. he dis-acknowledged a benefit; he was ungrateful. كند الشيء means, he cut the thing. كنود means, ungrateful man or woman; an unbeliever; a blamer of his Lord who remembers misfortunes and forgets favours; rebellious; niggardly; avaricious; who eats alone and beats his slaves. أرض كنود means, land that produces nothing (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to the

arrogant, base and miserly disbeliever who is also a coward. He is cruel towards the weak and does not feed the poor.

4817. Commentary:

Such a one indulges not only in the evils mentioned in the preceding verse but also takes pride in doing so.

4818. Commentary:

The verse means that there is no life left in the disbelievers. They seem to be lying dead in their graves—their houses. But soon they will rise in opposition to Islam and will march many miles to attack the Holy Prophet in Medina.

4819. Important Words:

حصل (brought forth) is transitive from حصل (ḥaṣala), which means, it became apparent; it came into existence; it became realized; it came to pass. حصل (ḥaṣala) means, he produced, retracted or fetched out; he made a thing apparent; he prepared; he separated, discriminated or

12. Surely, their Lord will, on that day, be fully Aware of them. **4820**

distinguished; he perceived a thing; he obtained or attained it; he acquired it; he collected (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The evil designs of the enemies of Islam will come to light.

4820. Commentary:

God is well aware of their evil designs and He will punish them for their evil actions.

CHAPTER 101

AL-QĀRI‘AH

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

This *Sūrah* was revealed early at Mecca. All commentators agree on this point. Nöldeke and Muir, too, subscribe to this view.

The *Sūrah* like *Sūrah* Zilzāl primarily gives a brief but lucid description of the tremendous convulsions and catastrophic upheavals that will shake the foundations of the world in the time of the Promised Messiah, while the immediately preceding *Sūrah* had dealt with the great fight that the Companions of the Holy Prophet put up against the forces of darkness. The *Sūrah* may equally apply to the Day of Judgement, in comparison to which there could be no greater calamity.



(AL-QĀRI‘AH)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bThe Great Calamity!^{4820A}

الْقَارِعَةُ ②

3. What is the Great Calamity?

مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ③

⁴⁸²¹

4. And what should make thee know what the Great Calamity is?⁴⁸²²

وَمَا أَذْرُبُكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ④

5. The day when mankind will be like scattered moths,⁴⁸²³

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ ⑤

^aSee 1:1. ^b13:32.

4820A. Important Words:

القارعة (the Great Calamity) is derived from قَرَعَ الباب i.e. he knocked at the door. قَرَعَهُ أَمْرٌ means, the affair came on him all of a sudden. قارعة means, a great and sudden calamity; the Day of Resurrection; an army marching forth and striking the enemy suddenly (Aqrab & Tāj). See also 13:32.

Commentary:

The particle ال particularizes قارعة (calamity) and imparts to it a special significance. القارعة thus means, a great calamity; the Promised Calamity or the Day of Judgement.

4821. Commentary:

Whereas the particle ال added to قارعة has particularized the calamity and heightened its dreadfulness, the addition of the particle ما (what) makes

it still more severe and destructive.

4822. Commentary:

The verse signifies that the calamity would be so catastrophic that it is impossible to conceive of its dreadfulness, much less to describe it in words. See also 69:2-5 where an identical expression to produce an analogous effect has been used. القارعة besides a great calamity, signifies punishment that suddenly comes upon disbelievers.

4823. Commentary:

Because it is beyond human mind to conceive of the dreadfulness of the calamity, a few of its horrible effects have been pointed out. This and the next verse give some idea of the confusion and distress it will cause.

The terrific and cataclysmic happening will scatter the people like flakes of carded wool, not finding

6. And the mountains will be like carded wool.

وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ ٥

7. Then, as for him whose scales are heavy,^a 4824

فَأَمَّا مَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ٦

8. He will have a pleasant life.

فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ٨

9. But as for him whose scales are light,^b

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ٩

10. Hell will be his *nursing* mother. 4825

فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ ١٠

11. And what should make thee know what that is?

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا هِيَ ١١

12. *It is* a ^cblazing Fire. 4826

ع ١٢

نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ ١٢

^a7:9; 23:103. ^b7:10; 23:104. ^c87:13; 88:5.

refuge anywhere.

4824. Commentary:

When used in relation to an individual موازين means, his works, but when used in relation to a nation, it means, its material means and resources; and according to the present-day terminology of war, 'tonnage' seems to be an exact rendering of the word. In the latter sense of the word the verse would mean that a nation whose material resources or tonnage of steamships or aeroplanes is heavy will predominate over its adversaries and this fact will add to its prestige and power and consequently to its happiness.

4825. Commentary:

أُم primarily meaning, 'mother' has a variety of secondary significations such as source, origin; support; an abode, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

The verse signifies that the

connection of the sinful people with Hell will be like that of a baby with its mother. Just as the embryo goes through various stages of development in the womb till it is born as a full-fledged human being, so will the guilty people pass through different stages of spiritual torture, till their souls are completely cleansed of the taint of sin and they will thus receive a new birth. Thus the punishments of Hell are intended to make the wicked repent of their sins and so reform themselves. According to Islamic concept Hell is a penitentiary.

4826. Commentary:

The expression, "it is a burning fire" signifies that the fire of Hell will be so hot as to defy description. The heat released by an atom bomb may perhaps give some idea, albeit an entirely incomplete one, of the heat of the Hell.

CHAPTER 102

AT-TAKĀTHUR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

By common consent this is one of the earliest *Sūrahs* revealed at Mecca. Its subject matter also shows that it belongs to that period.

In the preceding *Sūrah*, mention was made of the communities of disbelievers whom the Holy Prophet was to reform in his own time, in times following his death, and later, particularly, in the time of his Second Coming, in the person of the Promised Messiah. In the two chapters that immediately precede the present *Sūrah*, special mention was made of the punishment that was to overtake disbelievers in the Holy Prophet's own time and in the subsequent long career of Islam including the Age of his Second Advent. The *Sūrah* under comment deals with the factors which engender in man an inclination to, or a liking for, disbelief and which divert his attention away from God and truth.

The *Sūrah* deals with a very common and deadly spiritual disease, viz. vying with one another in amassing worldly goods and taking pride in their abundance. The Holy Prophet often used to recite the *Sūrah*; he is reported to have said that the *Sūrah* was equal in weight and worth to a thousand verses (Bayān, Baihaqī & Dailamī), thus stressing its great importance.



(AT-TAKĀTHUR)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Mutual rivalry in seeking worldly increase, ^bdiverts you from God ⁴⁸²⁷

أَلْهَمُّهُ التَّكَاثُرُ ②

3. Till you reach the graves. ⁴⁸²⁸

حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ③

4. Nay! you will soon come to know *the truth*.

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b24:38; 48:12; 62:10.

4827. Important Words:

التَّكَاثُرُ (mutual rivalry in worldly increase) is derived from كثر i.e. it was or became much, abundant, copious, great in number; it multiplied; it accumulated. تَكَاثَرُوا means, they contended, one with another, for superiority in numbers. التَّكَاثُرُ means, contending with one another for superiority in numbers or property, children and men. تَكَاثَرَتْ أَمْوَالُهُ means, his riches multiplied by degrees (Lane).

Commentary:

Acquisitiveness and man's inordinate desire to outstrip others in wealth, position and prestige lies at the root of all human troubles and the neglect of the higher values of life. It is man's great misfortune that his passion for acquiring worldly things knows no limit and leaves him no time to think of God or the Hereafter. He remains entirely engrossed in these things till death comes upon him.

Against general practice, the verb

لَا has not been followed by the preposition عَنْ in this verse. This enlarges the meaning of the verb, covering, as it does, all the things that are calculated to divert man's attention from God and not from any particular thing or object.

4828. Commentary:

Man remains engrossed in acquiring worldly goods till death comes upon him and then he finds that he had wasted all his precious life. The verse also signifies that competition for superiority in wealth, position and numbers has led to the undoing of individuals and even of nations. Moral rather than physical death is meant here, because physical death comes uninvited, but man himself brings about his moral death. So it is not unqualified rivalry and vying with one another that is condemned here. On the contrary, believers have been exhorted in the Quran to endeavour to outstrip one another in doing good (2:149 &

5. Nay again! you will soon come to know.⁴⁸²⁹

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥﴾

6. Nay! if you only knew with certain knowledge,

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٦﴾

7. You will surely see Hell in this very life.

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ﴿٧﴾

8. Aye, you will surely see it with the eye of certainty in the Hereafter.⁴⁸³⁰

ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٨﴾

35:32). It is the blind craze for worldly things, to the detriment of higher values, to which exception has been taken in this verse.

4829. Commentary:

Repetition of the verse is intended to add emphasis to and render more effective the warning contained in the *Sūrah*. Or the *Sūrah* may refer to the Nemesis that will come in the wake of blind engrossment in the acquisition of worldly things in this life and in the Hereafter.

4830. Commentary:

The verse administers a severe rebuke to disbelievers. It seems to say to them: "Why can't you understand the simple thing, that the wages of sin is death and that no spiritual life is left in you. Had you used common sense and what little amount of knowledge you possess, you would have seen a veritable Hell yawning before your eyes in this very life, i.e. you would have realized that your engrossment in the pursuit of pomp, circumstance and the material advantages of this temporary existence will cause your total ruin. But you give no thought to these stark

realities of life. You do not believe that such a thing will ever happen, but the time is fast approaching when you will see Divine punishment overtaking you in the form of diverse calamities."

It may be stated here that there are three stages of certainty, viz. علم اليقين i.e. "certainty by inference, عين اليقين i.e. "certainty by sight" and حق اليقين i.e. "certainty by realization." In the first stage a thing itself is not visible but from its visible effects a man can conclude that it exists. In the second stage not only the effects of a thing but the thing itself is visible, though its nature is not completely comprehended. In the third stage which is the stage of perfect realization or personal experience a man both through observation of the effects of a thing on others and through realization of its effect on himself, can have as complete an understanding of the nature of a thing as it is possible for him to have. These are also the stages of human knowledge with regard to Hell. A man can, by inference, attain certainty about the existence of Hell in this very life but it is after death

9. Then, on that day you shall
 be questioned about the favours
bestowed upon you. **4831**

ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ۖ

that he will see it with his own eyes, though it is on the Day of Resurrection that a sinful man will have full realization of it by personally experiencing it.

face to face to Hell, they will be told that God had bestowed upon them all kinds of favours, especially His greatest favour—the Holy Prophet—but they rejected and opposed him.

4831. Commentary:

When disbelievers will be brought

CHAPTER 103

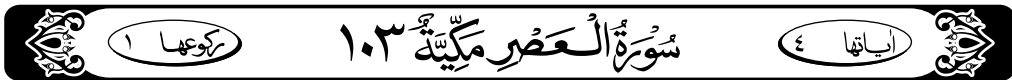
AL-‘AŞR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

By general agreement, this *Sūrah* was revealed in the early years of the Call. Western orientalists, besides Muslim commentators of the Quran, assign it to the early Meccan period.

The preceding *Sūrah* had dealt with man's passion for amassing wealth and worldly goods and its evil consequences. In the present *Sūrah* we are told that a purposeless life having no ideals to pursue goes to waste; and that material progress and prosperity cannot save a people if they do not possess faith and do not lead clean and pure lives. This is the unfailing testimony of time. Drunk with great material resources and power, prestige and prosperity, disbelievers, especially the Christian nations of today, labour under the misconception that these things will never see decline or diminution. On the other hand, Muslims for their part, seem to have despaired of their future. The *Sūrah* relates particularly to the present time. It may, however, be taken also to relate to the Holy Prophet's own time since by *العصر* is meant, his time.



(AL-'AṢR)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the Time, ⁴⁸³²

وَالْعَصْرِ ②

3. Surely, man is in a state of loss^b, ⁴⁸³³

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِفِي خُسْرٍ ③

4. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and ^cexhort one another to *accept* truth, and exhort one another to be steadfast. ⁴⁸³⁴

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b10:46; 65:10. ^c90:18.

4832. Important Words:

العصر (the Time) is inf. noun from عصر. They say عصرة i.e. he aided, succoured or assisted him; he saved and preserved him: he gave a gift and did some favour to him. عصر means; time or history or succession of ages: a period of time (syn. دهر); a day as opposed to night; a night as opposed to day; the afternoon; or evening. العصران means, the night and the day: the morning and the evening (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

See a collective note on the whole *Sūrah* under v: 4.

4833. Important Words:

خسر (in a state of loss). khasira (khasira) means, he suffered a loss; he lost his way; he was ruined (Lane).

Commentary:

الانسان (man) here signifies man as

mentioned in 17:12; 18:55; 36:78; 70:20, viz. the hasty, the contentious, the quarrelling and the impatient man.

4834. Important Words:

الصبر (to be steadfast) is inf. noun from صبر (ṣabara) which means, he was or became patient or enduring; he endured trial or affliction with dignity or he was contented in affliction or trial without complaining; he was steadfast amid trials; he made no difference between a state of ease and comfort and a state of affliction, preserving calmness of mind in both states (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

It is history's infallible testimony that those individuals or nations who do not make full use of their God-given powers and faculties and of the opportunities that come to them in this life, and who defy the eternal natural laws which determine the

destiny of man inevitably come to grief. It is such individuals and nations who are the losers in the race against time and it is to these that the word الإنسان in the *Sūrah* refers. Divine laws cannot be defied with impunity and the Quran repeatedly draws pointed attention to the sad fate of those people who have the audacity to do so, in the words: "Have they not travelled in the earth and seen what was the end of those before them?" (40:22).

Firm faith in eternal truths and the practical carrying out of them in our dealings in everyday life constitutes a sure guarantee for a happy, contented, prosperous and progressive life; and this is the meaning of the words "such as have faith and do righteous deeds." Man cannot escape "loss" which is the purpose or object of his life without possessing true and real faith in Divinely-revealed truths and adjusting his conduct in harmony with them. Human reason without the assistance of a revealed guidance cannot be a safe guide. It is Divine guidance received through God's great Messengers that can lead safely to the desired goal. But a person,

however, good and great, cannot bring about any real and permanent reformation single-handed unless the whole environment is changed, because man is strongly influenced by his environment. In this *Sūrah* and at several other places in the Quran, believers have been enjoined not only to adopt right and good principles and ideals themselves but to preach them to others and thus help in the creation of a healthy atmosphere around them. They are further enjoined not to be discouraged or dismayed by opposition and persecution they might have to face in the discharge of their very difficult task but to bear it with patience and fortitude. Thus the *Sūrah*, in one brief verse, has laid down the golden rules by observing which one can lead a successful and happy life. Taking the word العصر to mean the time of the Holy Prophet (Bukhārī) or taking it as applying to the latter days, the *Sūrah* emphatically declares that the disbelieving nations, with all their material resources and great power and prestige will suffer loss; only the righteous believers will achieve the noble goal they desire and pursue.

CHAPTER 104

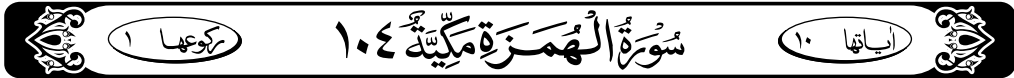
AL-HUMAZAH

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

This *Sūrah*, like the preceding one, was revealed very early at Mecca; it was in fact among the earliest *Sūrahs* to be revealed. There is complete unanimity of opinion among the commentators of the Quran on this point, and western orientalists also agree with this view.

In *Sūrah* At-Takāthur a warning was held out that unhealthy competition in amassing wealth and taking pride in it, is calculated to draw man's attention from God and from true values of life, and in *Sūrah* Al-'Aşr it was stated that only by noble ideals and righteous behaviour can man save himself from a life of "loss." In this *Sūrah* mention is made of the dreadful end of those wicked disbelievers who, instead of spending their hoarded wealth in promoting good causes, indulge in finding fault with, and slandering good and righteous believers. Hence the title "Al-Humazah."



(AL-HUMAZAH)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bWoe to every backbiter, slanderer, ⁴⁸³⁵

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ②

3. Who amasses wealth and counts it over and over. ^c ⁴⁸³⁶

الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b49:12; 68:12. ^c9:34; 89:21.

4835. Important Words:

همزة (backbiter is derived from همز) which means he goaded or spurred him, he beat him; he broke it; he drove him; he reproached him or found fault with him; he spoke ill of him behind his back. They say همزته اليه i.e. want drove him to it; همزة الحاجة i.e. want drove him to it; همزة means, one who finds fault with others behind their backs much or habitually; one who backbites others; who defames men (Lane & Aqrab).

لمزة (slanderer) possesses all the meanings of همزة with this difference that whereas همزة means, one who finds fault with people behind their backs, لمزة means, who finds fault with them behind their backs or before their faces. لمزه also means, he made a sign to him with the eye or the head and the lip with low speech (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The *Sūrah* is of general application but has been applied in particular to those evil-minded opponents of the Holy Prophet, who not being satisfied with persecuting him, defamed him and spread all sorts of lies and

slanders about him. As against two basic good qualities, viz. goodness and patience, mentioned in the preceding *Sūrah*, two evil qualities which cut at the root of all social peace and harmony have been mentioned in this *Sūrah*. Backbiting and slander-mongering are the two main evils from which the so-called civilized society badly suffers today.

4836. Important Words:

عدد (counts it over and over) is syn. with عدد ('adada) and also has an intensive signification. عدده means, he reckoned it time after time; he made it numerous; he made it a provision against the casualties of time. عدت الميت means, I enumerated the good qualities of the dead person (Lane & Aqrab).

مالا (wealth) means, great wealth; small wealth; worthless wealth which is great in the eyes of him who amasses it but small and worthless in the sight of God.

Commentary:

The verse constitutes a sad commentary on man's passion for worldly riches. Worship of Mammon

4. He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal. **4837**

يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ أَخْلَدَهُ ۖ

5. Nay! he shall surely be cast into the crushing punishment.

كَلَّا لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ۖ

4838

6. And what should make thee know what the crushing punishment is?

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ۖ

7. *It is* Allah's kindled fire,

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْقَدَةُ ۖ

8. Which rises over the hearts.

الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ ۖ

4839

9. It will be closed in on them^a **4840**

إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّوَصَدَةٌ ۖ

^a90:21.

is the bane of the materialistic civilization of the day.

4837. Commentary:

The verse signifies that the ill-fated miser goes on earning wealth by using all means and amasses and hoards it, taking pride in it and refraining from spending it in good causes, thinking that this will immortalize him, will rescue his name from oblivion and will render his prosperity abiding. He labours under a serious misconception. His hoarded wealth will prove his undoing and will be a constant source of heart-burning for him.

4838. Commentary:

الحطمة (crushing punishment) is derived from حطم. They say حطمته السن i.e. old age broke him. حطمت الدابة (ḥaṭīma) means, the beast became aged and emaciated and weak and broken with age. حطمة means, a

vehement fire that breaks into pieces everything that is cast into it; it is also a name for Hell or Hellfire; a man who eats much, i.e. breaks everything in eating; an insatiable man (Lane & Aqrab).

4839. Commentary:

There could be no greater humiliation or agony for a person than that he should see that the cause against which he had fought tooth and nail and which he had tried with might and main to crush, is progressing and prospering before his very eyes. It is this sense of burning and anguish of the heart which the leaders of the Quraish felt when they saw the tender plant of Islam growing into a big tree.

4840. Commentary:

If fire is enclosed on all sides, its effects become more intense.

10. In extended columns. **4841**

ع
٢٩

فِي عَمَدٍ مُمَدَّدَةٍ

4841. Commentary:

The verse may mean:
(1) Disbelievers will be bound down to tall columns when the fire will burn them, i.e. they will be quite helpless and will find no escape or refuge from Divine punishment.
(2) They will burn in a furnace of

which the columns will be very tall. This again is a metaphor pointing to the severity of the punishment of Hell. The tall columns may also signify evil customs and usages of disbelievers. These bad customs and traditions will take the form of tall columns in the next life.

CHAPTER 105

AL-FĪL

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Title & Date of Revelation

As its subject matter shows the *Sūrah* is among the earliest *Sūrahs* revealed at Mecca. The title of the *Sūrah* is taken from the expression اصحاب الفيل (Fellows of the Elephant), occurring in the first verse, Abraha's army being so called because of one or more elephants with them. The *Sūrah* refers to the invasion of Mecca by Abraha Ashram, the viceroy in Yemen of the Christian King of Abyssinia, who came with the object of destroying the Ka'bah.

Subject Matter

Dhū Nuwās, the Jewish Ḥimyar ruler of Yemen had put 20,000 Christians to death in cold blood. The Kaiser of Rome had ordered the Negus, King of Abyssinia, which then formed part of the Roman Empire, to avenge this cruel act of Dhū Nuwās. The Negus sent Abraha to Yemen. He defeated the Ḥimyar ruler and Yemen became part of the Abyssinian dominion and Abraha was appointed its viceroy. In order to curry favour with the Negus and to break the unity of the Arabs or, as tradition goes, to stem the apprehended tide of Arab nationalism under a great Prophet whose appearance was eagerly awaited and was expected to take place very soon, and in order also to divert the attention of the Arabs from the Ka'bah, and to preach and disseminate Christianity in Arabia, Abraha built a church at Sanā', the capital of Yemen. When, however, he failed to cajole or intimidate the Arabs into accepting the church at Sanā' in place of the Ka'bah as their central place of worship, he was stung with rage, and being intoxicated with his great military power he marched on Mecca with an army of 20,000 strong in order to raze the Ka'bah to the ground. Arriving at a place, a few miles from Mecca, he sent for the leaders of the Quraish in order to negotiate with them about the fate of the Ka'bah. The Quraish deputation, led by the venerable 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib, grandfather of the Holy Prophet, met Abraha who treated 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib with great honour. But to Abraha's great surprise, 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib, instead of beseeching that the Ka'bah be spared, only requested that his two hundred camels which Abraha's men had seized be restored. 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib on being told by Abraha that he had not expected such a paltry request from him, poured out the anguish of his heart and expressed his firm faith in the invulnerability of the Ka'bah in the words: اِنِّى اَنَا رَبُّ الْاَيْلِ وَاِنَّ لِلْبَيْتِ رَبًّا يَمْنَعُهُ i.e. I am the master of the camels and the Ka'bah has a Master who will protect it" (Al-Kāmil, vol. 1). The negotiations, however, broke down and finding that

they were too weak to offer effective resistance to Abraha, ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib advised his compatriots to repair to the surrounding hills. Before leaving the city, ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib, holding the skirts of the Ka‘bah, prayed in the following words full of extreme pathos:

لا هم ان المرء يمنع رحله فأمنع حلالك
لا يغلبن صليبيهم ومحالهم غدوا محالك

i.e. just as a man protects his house and property from plunder, so do Thou o Lord, defend Thine own House and suffer not the Cross to triumph over the Ka‘bah ("Tārīkh Al-Kāmil," by Ibn Athīr, vol. 1, p. 156 & Muir). Abraha's army had hardly moved when the Divine scourge overtook them. "A pestilential distemper," says Muir, "had shown itself in the camp of Abraha. It broke out with deadly pustules and blains and was probably an aggravated form of smallpox. In confusion and dismay the army commenced retreat. Abandoned by their guides, they perished among the valleys, and a flood swept multitudes into the sea. Scarcely any recovered who had once been smitten by it and Abraha himself, a mass of malignant and putrid sores, died miserably on his return to Sanā'." It is to this incident particularly that the *Sūrah* refers. The fact that the disease which destroyed Abraha's army was smallpox in a virulently epidemic form is supported by the great historian Ibn Ishāq. He quotes ‘Ā’ishah as saying that she saw two blind beggars in Mecca and on enquiring who they were, she was told that they were the drivers of Abraha's elephant. (Durr-e-Manthūr)



(Al-Fil)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the People of the Elephant?⁴⁸⁴²

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ②

3. Did He not cause their ^bplan to miscarry?⁴⁸⁴³

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ ③

4. And He sent against them swarms of birds,⁴⁸⁴⁴

وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b27: 51-52.

4842. Commentary:

This verse refers to Abraha, who marched on Mecca with a large army in 570 A.D., the year of the Holy Prophet's birth, in order to destroy the Ka'bah. The Holy Prophet's birth taking place in the year of Abraha's attack on the Ka'bah and the utter destruction of his army implied a Divine hint that because the great Prophet for whose sake the Ka'bah had been built and who was to preach the Last Heavenly Message from there was about to be born, it militated against God's eternal plan that it should suffer destruction at the hands of an arch-infidel. Abraha had a number of elephants with him. They were destroyed by a plague or epidemic, of the nature of smallpox, and their rotting bodies were eaten up by swarms of birds. For a detailed account of this incident see Introduction.

The expression كيف فعل refers more

to the dreadfulness of the scourge which destroyed Abraha's army than to the manner of their destruction.

4843. Commentary:

How Abraha was foiled in his design is writ large on the pages of history.

4844. Important Words:

أَبَابِيل (swarms): the word is said to have no singular. According to some its singular is أَبِيل which means, a separate or distinct portion of a number of birds or horses or camels following one another. أَبَابِيل signifies, according to some, a company in a state of dispersion, or dispersed companies following one another, or distinct or separate companies like camels. They say جاءت اهلك أَبَابِيل i.e. thy camels came in distinct or separate companies. طَيْر أَبَابِيل means, birds in separate flocks or bevvies, or birds in companies from this or that quarter, or following one another, flock after flock (Lane & Aqrab).

5. Which ate their carrion,
striking them against stones of
clay.⁴⁸⁴⁵

تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ۖ

6. And thus made them like
broken straw, eaten up.

عِ

فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّا كُوِّلَ ۖ

Commentary:

See Introduction.

4845. Important Words:

ب (against). Among a variety
meanings, this particle is syn. with على
meaning, over, upon, at, or against.
An Arab poet says:

أرب يبول الثعلبان برأسه
لقد هان من بالته عليه الثعالب

i.e. how can he be رب (Lord) upon
whose head jackals make water and

how base he is (Al-Yawāqīt wal-
Jawāhir, vol. 1).

In the Quran we have منهم من ان تأمنه
بدینار i.e. "of them is he that if thou
give him charge over a dinar (3:76)."

Commentary:

Swarms of birds feasted themselves
upon dead bodies of the invaders,
striking the severed pieces against
stones, as birds generally do when
eating the small and severed pieces of
the dead body of an animal.

CHAPTER 106

QURAISH

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

This *Sūrah*, like its predecessor, was revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Call. Though an independent *Sūrah*, complete in all respects, its subject matter is so closely related to *Sūrah Al-Fīl* that it has been wrongly regarded by some commentators as a part of that *Sūrah*.

In *Sūrah Al-Fīl* a brief but graphic and forceful description was given of the utter annihilation of Abraha's army (who had come to destroy the Ka'bah) by a heavenly scourge which took the form of a virulent variety of smallpox. In the present *Sūrah*, God reminds the Quraish that it behoved them to worship "the Lord of this House"—the "House" to serve which they were granted security from fear and hunger. In the preceding *Sūrah* mention was made of an enemy of the Ka'bah and of the Divine punishment that overtook him for his audacity to launch an attack on it. In the present *Sūrah*, it is stated how in the utterly bleak and arid valley of Mecca God provided the custodians of His House with every kind of food and made them secure against fear or danger.



(QURAISH)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. For the attachment of the Quraish—4846

لَا يَلْفُ قُرَيْشٌ ②

3. *His* making them attached to *their* journey in winter and summer—4847

أَلْفَهُمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ ③

^aSee 1:1.

4846. Important Words:

ل is a particle which, besides many other meanings, is used in exclamation of wonder (Steingass).

ايلات (attachment) is inf. noun from الف (alafa). They say الله i.e. he made him to cleave or keep to the place; he made him love him or it; he made him stick to it; he made a covenant with him for the purpose of trade, he traded with him; he provided him with necessary things and prepared him. ايلات means, sticking or making one stick to a thing; loving and making one love a person or thing; providing a person with a thing; a covenant or an obligation involving responsibility for safety; protection (Lane & Aqrab).

قریش (the Quraish) is derived from قرش. They say قرشه i.e. he collected it from here and there and attached one part of it to another (Aqrab). The Quraish were so called because one of their ancestors Quṣṣayy bin Kilāb bin Naḍr had prevailed upon them to migrate from all parts of Arabia where they had lived a scattered life,

and to settle in Mecca. Of Banū Kanānah only the progeny of Naḍr settled in Mecca and as they (Quraish) were a small group, they were called قریش which means, a small group gathered from here and there.

Commentary:

See next verse.

4847. Commentary:

As ل is a particle and in Arabic a new sentence never begins with a particle, a sentence or clause or expression therefore must be taken as understood before the words لا يلف قریش as before بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ the word أَقْرَأُ (I read) or أَشْرَعُ (I begin) is taken to be understood. In the present case the understood expression, according to some commentators, is اعجب يا محمد and the verse is supposed to read something like this: اعجب يا محمد لنعم الله على قریش في ايلاتهم رحلة الشتاء والصيف i.e. do thou wonder O Muḥammad at God's great favour upon the Quraish that He has created in their hearts love for journeying in winter and summer. The Divine favour consisted in the fact that by taking trade caravans in

4. They should worship the Lord of this House,^a

فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ ۖ

5. Who has fed them against hunger, and has given them security against fear. **4848**

الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ

ع

وَأَمَّنَّهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ ۖ

^a3:97; 27:92.

winter to Yemen and in summer to Syria and Palestine, the Quraish brought necessities of life to Mecca. By this trading activity, they developed a certain prestige and also became acquainted with the prophecies about the appearance of a great Prophet in Arabia by coming into contact with Jews of Yemen and Christians of Syria who knew those prophecies. It was indeed a great Divine favour that God created in the hearts of the Quraish a liking, for making journeys to Yemen and Syria. They were so rooted in the soil and had such great attachment for the Ka'bah that they would rather starve than leave it, even temporarily. It was by the exhortation of Hāshim, the Holy Prophet's great grandfather, that they took to this calling. Thus it constituted a great Divine favour upon the Quraish that by their journeys to these places they, besides other advantages of these journeys, were being prepared to accept the coming Prophet when he appeared.

Apart from the expression اعجب يا محمد taken as understood, there is another explanation of the verses which fits in, perhaps more appropriately, with the context. This is as follows: "Thy Lord destroyed the Owner of the Elephant to attach

the hearts of the Quraish to their journeying freely in winter and summer, which constituted a great Divine favour upon them." This is because if Abraha had not been destroyed it would have been impossible for the Quraish to make journeys to Yemen. The destruction of Abraha, therefore, besides opening the way for trade journeys to Yemen, made the Ka'bah all the more sacred in the eyes of the Arabs for whom it was already a place of Pilgrimage. This in its turn gave added impetus to the trade of the Quraish.

4848. Commentary:

It was indeed a great Divine favour that as servants of the Ka'bah the Quraish were granted perfect security from fear, while all around them raged fear and insecurity. Besides, they were provided round the year, with every kind of fruit and food. All this was not due to mere chance. It was in pursuance of a Divine plan and in fulfilment of a prophecy made by the Patriarch Abraham 2500 years before (14:36, 38 & 2:127, 130).

The verse drives home to the disbelieving Quraish their guilt of ingratitude by telling them that they had taken to the worship of gods made of wood and stone.

CHAPTER 107

AL-MĀ'ŪN

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

This *Sūrah*, like the one preceding it, is among those revealed very early at Mecca. It takes its title from the word الماعون with which it ends.

In the preceding *Sūrah* the Quraish were told that God had granted them peace and security from danger, and had provided them with all necessities of life purely out of His grace and mercy and not due to any effort on their part or because they deserved all these favours. They were warned, therefore, that as an act of gratitude they should have rendered sincere and devoted service to their Gracious Maker. But they became engrossed in the pursuit of worldly affairs and took to idol worship. In this *Sūrah* it is stated that love of the world causes nations to lose faith in the Hereafter and to consign God to oblivion. The *Sūrah* deals with two basic principles of Islam, whose neglect constitutes denial of religion itself. The principles are the worship of God and the service of fellow human beings.



(AL-MĀ'ŪN)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Hast thou seen him who denies the Judgement?^b4849

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْدِّينِ ②

3. That is the one who drives away the orphan,⁴⁸⁵⁰

فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدُعُّ الْيَتِيمَ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b82:10.

4849. Important Words:

الدين (the Judgement) is inf. noun from دان which means, he obeyed. دين means: (1) requital or recompense; (2) obedience; (3) judgement or reckoning; (4) ascendancy or predominance; (5) mastery or rule; (6) plan; (7) prayer; (8) religious organisation; (9) righteousness; (10) state or condition; (11) Divine decree; (12) habit or custom (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In view of the different meanings of دين the verse may signify: He is indeed a very bad man (1) who has no faith in Divine reckoning; (2) who disobeys and defies the organization of the community to which he belongs; (3) who does not believe that good prevails over evil in the long run; (4) who does not believe in the pattern of prophethood; (5) who does not believe in religion which is the source and basis of all morals; (6) who does not give up evil ways and does not lead a righteous life; (7) one with whom the doing of good does

not become a habit; (8) who does not conform his conduct to the Divine decree, i.e. does not develop in him Divine attributes; (9) who does not worship God with true and sincere devotion; and (10) who has no plan in life, i.e. who despairs of his future. Thus the word الدين includes in its signification all those things, violation of which results in complete moral ruin of individuals and nations.

4850. Important Words:

يدع (drives away). دعه means, he pushed him away; thrust him away or drove him away; or he repelled him or he did so harshly, roughly or violently (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In the preceding verse we were told that denial of religion opens the way to all manner of evil. This and the next verse speak of two most deadly ills of society, which, if not scrupulously guarded against, bring about decline and disintegration of a community. The failure to take proper care of the orphans kills in a people the spirit of sacrifice; neglect of the poor and the needy deprives a useful

4. And urges not the feeding of the poor.^a

وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ ٤

5. So woe to those who pray,⁴⁸⁵¹

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ ٥

6. But are unmindful of their Prayer. ⁴⁸⁵²

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ٦

7. They like *only* to be seen of men,^b ⁴⁸⁵³

الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ ٧

8. And withhold *legal* alms^c. ⁴⁸⁵⁴

ع ٨

وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ ٨

^a69:35; 74:45; 89:19. ^b4:143. ^c4:54.

section of the community of all initiative and the will to improve their lot. These two verses represent one of the two basic principles of Islam i.e. service of humanity (شفقة على خلق الله).

4851. Commentary:

Prayer represents the duties and obligations we owe to God. They are called حقوق الله (obligations due to God) in religious terminology. The verse purports to say that the prayers of those hypocritical Pharisees who do not discharge the obligations they owe to God's creatures are a body without soul, a shell without substance. All their actions are hypocritical which, instead of doing them any good, add to their hypocrisy and insincerity.

4852. Commentary:

The المصلين (worshippers) of the preceding verse have been condemned here as unmindful of their Prayers, since their Prayers fail to bring about in them moral change which Prayers are intended to create and develop.

4853. Commentary:

The hypocritical Pharisees make only a show of soulless acts of goodness and charity.

4854. Important Words:

الماعون (legal alms) is derived from معن and means, rainwater; small household articles of common use such as axe, cooking pot, etc; good; an act of kindness, any useful thing; obedience; Zakāh (Aqrab).

CHAPTER 108

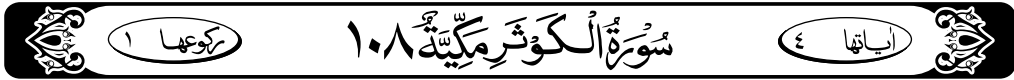
AL-KAUTHAR

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

Being one of the earliest revelations, this *Sūrah* constitutes a strong proof of the Quran being the revealed Word of God, and of the serial arrangement of the *Sūrahs* having been adopted under Divine direction, for, while the *Sūrah* was revealed very early at Mecca, sometime in the first four years of the Call, it has been placed almost at the end of the Holy Book. The order in which the Quran exists today is different from the order in which it was revealed. It is indeed a miracle of the Quran that the order in which the various *Sūrahs* were revealed was best suited to the needs of the period during which they were revealed, but they were arranged as its component parts in the order which was best suited for the needs of all human beings for all time to come. The promise contained in the *Sūrah* was made at a time when the Holy Prophet was hardly known outside Mecca and his claim that he was the last Deliverer of humanity was looked upon by his compatriots as unworthy of serious consideration. The promise is in emphatic and certain terms. The words, "We have given thee abundance of good," show that the promised good has already been given to the Prophet. It was in the fitness of things that in order to prove the Divine origin of the *Sūrah* it should have been revealed at a time when, humanly speaking, there was hardly any possibility of fulfilment of the promise and that it should have been placed at the end of the Quran when the promise had already been fulfilled.

The connection of the *Sūrah* with its predecessor lies in the fact that whereas in the preceding *Sūrah* four prominent moral sins of the hypocrites and of Muslims of weak faith were mentioned, in the *Sūrah* under comment the corresponding four virtues of the righteous believers have been referred to, viz. generosity, regularity in saying daily Prayers, devotion to God, and willingness to make sacrifices for national causes.



(AL-KAUTHAR)

1. "In the name of Allah, the
Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Surely, We have given thee^b
abundance of good; 4855

إِنَّا آعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ②

^aSee 1:1. ^b93:6.

4855. Important Words:

الكوثر (abundance of good) is derived from كثر which means, it was or became much, copious, abundant, many, numerous, great in number or quantity; it multiplied or accumulated. كثر means, abundance of good; a lord or master abounding in good; a man possessing good or much good, and one who gives much and often. According to some of the sayings of the Holy Prophet it is a certain river in Paradise, from which flow all other rivers. It is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey and has its margin composed of pavilions of hallowed pearls (Lane, Aqrah, Mufradât and Jarîr).

Commentary:

The *Sûrah* refers to the Holy Prophet as one on whom abundant good has been bestowed. It was revealed at a time when the Prophet had nothing to give. He was living the life of a poor man and his claim to prophethood was looked upon with contempt and as unworthy of serious consideration. For years after the *Sûrah* had been revealed he was mocked and jeered at, opposed and persecuted and at last had to leave his

native town as a fugitive, a price having been laid on his head. For several years at Medina, too, his life was in constant peril and Islam was eagerly expected (and humanly speaking justifiably) by its enemies to come to an early and tragic end. Then towards the end of his life an abundance of good in every shape and form began to pour down upon him like a cataract, and the promise contained in the *Sûrah* was literally fulfilled. The "outlaw" of Mecca became the arbiter of the destinies of the whole of Arabia, and the unlettered son of the desert proved to be the living Teacher of all mankind. God gave him a Book which is humanity's infallible guide for all time to come. He imbibed and manifested in his person Divine attributes and rose to such high degree of nearness to his Creator as is possible for any human being to attain. He was blessed with a company of devoted followers whose loyalty and devotion has never been equalled, and when the call came to him from his Creator to leave the world he was satisfied that he had fully discharged the sacred task entrusted to him. In short, all kinds of

3. So pray to thy Lord, and offer sacrifice. **4856**

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ ۖ

4. Surely, it is thy enemy who is without issue^a. **4857**

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ ۚ

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ ۚ

^a111:2.

good, material and moral, were bestowed upon the Holy Prophet in full measure. He, therefore, eminently deserved the title, "the most successful of all Prophets" (Enc. Brit.).

The word كَوْن also signifies, a man possessing much good and one who gives much and often (Lane). The Holy Prophet was given الكوثر in this sense also, because God raised among his followers a galaxy of Divinely inspired Reformers who successfully defended him and Islam in every age and guided and led the erring Muslims to the right path. Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad, Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement, was the most distinguished of these Reformers. He distributed most lavishly the treasures of divine wealth given to him by God, thus fulfilling the prophecy of the Holy Prophet about the Promised Messiah and Mahdī, viz. يفيض المال حتى لا يقبله أحد (Bukhārī) i.e. he will spend spiritual wealth so lavishly that there will be none left to accept it. So the Promised Messiah may be الكوثر referred to in this verse.

4856. Commentary:

The verse enjoins the Holy Prophet to turn to God with utmost devotion and be prepared to undergo all manner of sacrifice for the achievement of his great goal—the

attainment of الكوثر.

4857. Important Words:

الابتر (one without issue) is derived from بتر which means, he cut off or cut off utterly or entirely. أبتره means, he cut off his tail. أبتر means, any beast having the tail cut off; a short-tailed serpent; one in want or poor; defective, deficient, imperfect; suffering loss; from whom all good or prosperity is cut off; having no offspring or no male issue (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

It is very significant that in this verse enemies of the Holy Prophet have been emphatically referred to as ابتر i.e., having no male issue; while the historical fact is that all the sons of the Holy Prophet himself born before and after the revelation of this *Sūrah* died and he left no male issue after him. This shows that "ابتر" mentioned in the verse only means, one deprived of spiritual issues and not of sons commonly so called. In fact, it was God's own design that the Holy Prophet should leave no male issue as he was destined to be the spiritual father of a multitude of sons in all ages to the end of time, sons who were to be far more faithful, obedient and loving than the sons of any father. He was not only the spiritual father of the Faithful but in a

sense the father also of all the Prophets of God before and after him. This is the significance of the verse
 مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ
 i.e. Muḥammad is not (and will not be) the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets; (33:41). And this also seems to be the significance of the verse
 النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ
 i.e. the Prophet is nearer to the believers than their own selves and his

wives are as mothers to them (33:7). Thus, it was not the Holy Prophet but his enemies who died issueless, since by joining the fold of Islam their sons became the spiritual issues of the Holy Prophet, who felt a sense of shame and humiliation at their pedigree being attributed to their own fathers.

The verse may also signify: "Surely, it is thy enemy who is cut off from all good or prosperity."

CHAPTER 109

AL-KĀFIRŪN

(Revealed before Hijrah)

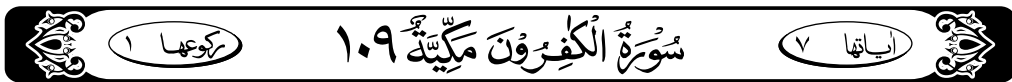
Date of Revelation & Context

It is generally agreed that this *Sūrah* was revealed at Mecca. Ḥasan, ‘Ikrimah and Ibn Mas‘ūd are of this opinion. Ibn Mas‘ūd being one of the earliest Companions of the Holy Prophet, his opinion about the date of the revelation of a particular *Sūrah* naturally carries great weight. Nöldeke places this chapter in the beginning of the fourth year of the Call. This fact, incidentally, belies the baseless accusation of some Christian hostile critics of Islam that the Holy Prophet had agreed to make a compromise with idolatry at the time of revelation of chapter 53, which by common consent was revealed in the fifth year of the Call, as in the *Sūrah* under comment which was revealed only one year before the supposed compromise with idolatry in every shape or form has been emphatically rejected.

Subject Matter

The subject matter of the *Sūrah* has a deep connection with that of the *Sūrah* preceding it. No two *Sūrahs*, perhaps, are so intimately connected with each other as these are. The subject dealt with in the opening verses of the *Sūrah* inevitably flows from, and is the direct result of, the subject treated in *Sūrah* Al-Kauthar. In *Sūrah* Al-Kauthar it was stated that spiritual and material blessings will be bestowed upon the Holy Prophet such as have no parallel or precedent in human history. As a new Adam, he will be the progenitor of a new world, and his progeny alone will continue to prosper. In the *Sūrah* under comment those disbelievers against whom a Divine decree had gone forth that they will not accept Islam are admonished that if having seen manifest signs in support of the Holy Prophet they refused to accept him, how could they expect Muslims to give up their Faith and accept their foolish and fantastic doctrines? If disbelievers entertained any such hope they were mistaken. The only reasonable course left to them was to wait for God’s judgement to come into operation.

In view of the importance of the subject matter of the *Sūrah*, the Holy Prophet enjoined its frequent recital. He is reported to have said that *Sūrah* Ikhlāṣ was equal to 1/3 of the Quran, the present *Sūrah* to 1/4 of it, and whosoever would frequently recite these two *Sūrahs* and deliberate over their subject matter would command great respect and prestige, (Ibn Mardawaih), meaning, that as *Sūrah* Ikhlāṣ, deals with a basic principle of Islam—Divine Unity—and as in the present *Sūrah* believers are enjoined courageously to stick to their Faith, in an hostile environment or under adverse circumstances, he who will comprehend and realize the significance and importance of these *Sūrahs* will necessarily command great respect.



(AL-KĀFIRŪN)

1. "In the name of Allah, the
Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Say, 'O ye disbelievers! 4858

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ ②

3. I worship not as you
worship;^b4859

لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b10:105; 39:15-16.

4858. Commentary:

The Divine command expressed by قل (say) applies, besides the Holy Prophet, to every Muslim. Besides the present *Sūrah*, this word is placed at the beginning of chapters 72, 112, 113 and 114, and is used in about 306 verses of the Quran, and wherever it is used it emphasizes the importance of the subject governed by it. Thus believers are enjoined to proclaim loudly and repeatedly, and to convey to disbelievers in clear and definite terms, the great principles of Islam enunciated and emphasized in the present *Sūrah*.

The use of اِيَّاهُ (O ye) is intended to draw pointed attention to the subject matter of the *Sūrah* and to emphasize its importance. The expression has frequently been used in the Quran to serve this purpose.

The word الْكَافِرُونَ (the disbelievers) has a general application, or it may refer to those confirmed disbelievers who by their persistent and defiant rejection of truth rule out all possibility of accepting it and disbelief becomes, as it were, a part

of their being.

4859. Commentary:

Various explanations have been given to the present and the next three verses by commentators. Some say that as the pagan Meccans had put their question in two forms, therefore two forms have been adopted in answer to their question. Others say that the repetition is for the sake of emphasis. Yet some others like Zajjāj are of the opinion that the first two sentences signify denial of worship in the present time and the last two sentences denial of it in future. As against this, Zamakhsharī says that the first two sentences stand for denial of worship in future while the last two for that in the past. Be that as it may, when لَا (no, not) governs مضارع, it signifies future tense. According to this usage of the particle the expression would mean: "I will never worship."

Moreover, the particle مَا is used in two ways; as مصدرية transforming into infinitive the verb which it governs, and as موصولة meaning الذي i.e. "that which." Sometimes it is also used for

4. Nor do you worship as I worship,

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عِبِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ۚ

5. And I shall not worship that which you worship;

وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا عَبَدْتُمْ ۝

6. Nor will you worship Him whom I worship.

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عِبِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ۝

7. For you your religion, and for me my religion.^a 4860

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ۚ

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ۚ

^a2:140; 10:42.

rational beings and means من i.e. "he who." According to the various uses of the particle the verses would mean: I will not adopt your way of worship, or, I will not worship those that you worship, whether rational beings or irrational inanimate things. But the verses have a better and more appropriate translation if ما is taken as مصدرية in the former two verses and as موصولة in the latter two. Thus, the four verses would be interpreted something like this "I will never adopt your mode or manner of worship, nor will you adopt the manner in which I worship. And I shall not worship those things (idols)

or rational or irrational beings whom you worship, nor will you worship Him Whom I worship."

4860. Commentary:

For different meanings of دين see 107:2. According to these the verse signifies: "As there is absolutely no meeting ground between your way of life and mine and as we are in complete disagreement not only with regard to the basic concepts of religion but also with regard to its details and other aspects, therefore, there cannot possibly be any compromise between us.

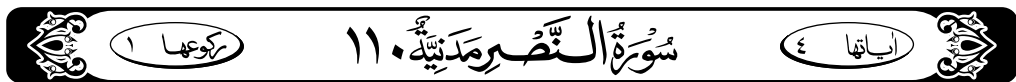
CHAPTER 110

AN-NAŞR

(Revealed at Mecca after Hijrah)

Introduction

This is a Medinite *Sūrah* in the sense that it was revealed after Hijrah in the Medinite period, but is a Meccan *Sūrah* in the sense that it was revealed at Mecca on the occasion of the last Pilgrimage, only about 70 or 80 days before the Holy Prophet's demise. All relevant historical data, coupled with reliable traditions and supported by such eminent authority as 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar, one of the very early and distinguished Companions of the Holy Prophet, have assigned this date to its revelation. This was the last whole *Sūrah* to be revealed, though the last verse with which the Quranic revelation came to an end was the 4th verse of *Sūrah Al-Mā'idah*, viz: "This day have those who disbelieve despaired of harming your religion. So fear them not, but fear Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as religion." In the preceding *Sūrah* disbelievers were plainly told that as their outlook on life, their ideals and principles, their religious practices and mode and manner of worship were quite different from those of believers, there was no possibility of a compromise between the two. They shall reap the consequences of their deeds while the Muslims will enjoy the fruits of their labour. In the present *Sūrah* believers are told that the victory promised to them has already come and people have joined the fold of Islam in large numbers. Therefore, they, particularly the Holy Prophet, should give thanks to his Lord, extol His praises and seek protection from Him against shortcomings and moral weaknesses that generally find their way into a new Movement at a time when large groups of people join its fold, because, in view of a vast number of new converts and owing to lack of adequate number of experienced teachers to teach them the essentials of the new Movement, they fail to comprehend and assimilate properly its teaching or imbibe its spirit.



(AN-NAŞR)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the help of Allah comes, and the victory,⁴⁸⁶¹

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ ②

3. And thou seest men entering the religion of Allah in troops,

وَرَأَيْتِ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي

دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا ③

4. ^bGlorify thy Lord, with His praise, and seek forgiveness of Him. Surely, He is Oft-Returning with compassion.⁴⁸⁶²

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ ④

ع ٣٥

إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ⑤

^aSee 1:1. ^b15:99; 20:131; 50:40.

4861. Commentary:

مَكُونَهَا means, the promised victory.

4862. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is here enjoined that since God's promise has been fulfilled and large masses of people have begun to enter the fold of Islam, he should give thanks to his Lord for fulfilling His promise about victory, sing His praises and seek His protection and forgiveness.

The expression استغفره has a very wide significance. The Holy Prophet is here told that since victory has come to him and Islam has become predominant in the land and his erstwhile enemies have become his devoted servants, he should ask God to forgive them the grave wrongs they had done to him in the past. This seems to be the meaning and significance of the injunction to the

Holy Prophet to seek God's forgiveness. Or the Holy Prophet might have been enjoined to ask God's protection against weaknesses and shortcomings that might find their way into the Muslim Community on account of lack of adequate training or education for the new converts. It is significant that whenever mention is made in the Quran of a destined victory or some great success falling to the Holy Prophet, he is generally told to ask God's forgiveness and to seek His protection. This clearly shows that he is enjoined here to ask for God's forgiveness and to seek His protection not for himself but for others; he is asked to pray that whenever there was any danger of his followers deviating from Islamic principles or precepts, God may save them from such a crisis. Thus there is

no question here of the Prophet's asking forgiveness for any of his own actions. According to the Quran, he enjoyed complete immunity from every moral lapse or deviation from the right course (53:3). For a detailed treatment, however, of the word استغفار see 40:56 & 48:3.

The expression, "He is Oft-Returning with compassion," holds a

message of hope for the Holy Prophet. He is told that whenever there was any danger of his followers deviating from the path of Islam and falling victims to moral decay on a large scale, God will return to them with compassion and will raise from among them a Reformer who will lead them to the right path.

CHAPTER 111

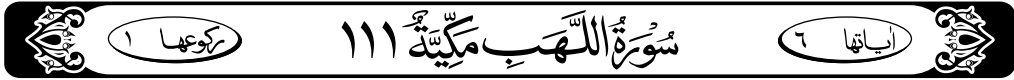
AL-LAHAB

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

There is complete unanimity of opinion among Muslim scholars and commentators, that this *Sūrah* was revealed at Mecca during the early years of the Call. Nöldeke and Muir also subscribe to this view. Some scholars, however, are of the opinion that the *Sūrah* was the fifth to be revealed, the four *Sūrahs*—‘Alaq, Qalam, Muzzammil and Muddaththir, preceding it. The *Sūrah* seems to deal with people having red faces and fiery tempers; hence its title.

In *Sūrah* Al-Kauthar, the Holy Prophet was given a two-fold promise about the great and rapid increase of his following and about the failure of the machinations of his enemies against Islam. In the preceding *Sūrah*—An-Naṣr—reference was made to the first part of the promise; the present *Sūrah* refers to its second part.



(AL-LAHAB)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bPerish the two hands of Abū Lahab, and perish he!⁴⁸⁶³

تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ②

^aSee 1:1. ^b108:4.

4863. Important Words:

يدان (two hands), is the dual form of يد which among other things means, power, influence; assistance, help, protection; troops, host, army; possession; wealth (Lane). See also 5:65, & 38:46.

تب (perish) means, he suffered loss; he became lost; he perished; he died. تباب (tabbun) and تبيب, تباب are all infinitive nouns meaning, loss; death; destruction; perdition. They say تباه i.e. may he perish; may perdition be his lot. تبَّت يده also means, may he perish (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

ابولهب (Father of Flame) was the nick name of ‘Abdul-‘Uzzā, the Holy Prophet’s uncle and his inveterate enemy and persecutor. He was so called either because his complexion and hair were ruddy or because he had a fiery temper. The *Sūrah* recalls an incident during the early preachings of the Holy Prophet. On being informed by God to call together his relatives and to deliver to them the Divine Message the Holy Prophet stood on the Mount Ṣafā and called the different Meccan tribes by

name—the tribes of Lawwī, Murra, Kilāb and Quṣṣayy, and his near relatives, and told them that he was God’s Messenger, and that if they did not accept his Message and did not give up their evil ways, Divine punishment would overtake them. The Holy Prophet had hardly finished his speech, when Abū Lahab stood up and said, تبالك ألهذا جمعنا هذا اليوم i.e. ruin seize thee, is it for this that thou hast called us together (Bukhārī).

The sobriquet "Father of Flame" may either refer to the Holy Prophet’s uncle or to any hot tempered enemy of Islam or better still it may apply to the western powers of the latter days who own and control atomic and nuclear weapons—one group of them repudiating God altogether, and the other denying His Unity but both being equally opposed to Islam. In this sense "the two hands" would signify these two groups.

The verse purports to say that all endeavours and machinations of the enemies of Islam, particularly of the two groups of western powers and their satellites, would utterly fail and all their nefarious designs would recoil on their own heads; they would

3. "His wealth and what he has earned shall avail him not."⁴⁸⁶⁴

مَا آغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ ۖ

4. Soon shall he burn in a flaming fire;⁴⁸⁶⁵

سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا إِذَا تَلَهَبٌ ۚ

5. And his wife the carrier of the firewood.^{4865A}

وَأَمْرَأَتُهُ ۖ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ ۚ

6. Round her neck shall be a halter of twisted palm-fibre.⁴⁸⁶⁶

فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ ۚ

^a3:11; 58:18.

burn with rage at seeing Islam progressing, and their own wealth, power and possessions (أيدٍ) perishing before their very eyes.

4864. Commentary:

This verse appropriately may also apply to the wealthy western powers who have great material resources at their disposal. The words "his wealth" may mean the wealth produced in their own countries, and "what he has earned" may signify the riches they have earned by exploiting weaker nations and despoiling them of their natural resources.

4865. Commentary:

The expression أُولَٰهَب may also mean, one who invents something which produces fire and flames, or one who is himself consumed in the flames of fire. In this sense, the verse may be interpreted as predicting the destruction of the two major political Blocs of the latter days by their own fire-producing weapons, such as atom bombs and other nuclear weapons. The verse also shows that the day of reckoning for these nations is not far off. It seems to have already arrived.

4865A. Commentary:

حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ (the carrier of firewood). حطب is inf. noun from حطَب (ḥaṭaba) which means, he collected firewood, حطب به means he slandered him. They say هو يعمل الحطب بين الناس i.e. he goes about spreading calumny or slander among the people (Lane & Aqrab).

زوجه (his wife) is syn. with امرأته which among other things means, an associate, a comrade, wife (Lane).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse seems to be to Abū Lahab's wife, Ummi Jamīl who strewed the Holy Prophet's path with thorns and went about spreading calumnies against him. The verse may also apply to people in Western democracies or in the Communist bloc who spread calumnies and false accusations against Islam and urge their leaders to break its power. The verse may also signify that these nations would be constantly engaged in manufacturing weapons for their own destruction.

4866. Commentary:

Though apparently free, these nations will be so strongly tied to

their respective political ideologies and systems that they will not be able to break away from them. Or like Ummi Jamīl who is said to have become strangled by the very rope by which she carried firewood, these nations would perish by the very means by which they would seek to destroy others.

As a fitting postscript to the *Sūrah* two of the prophecies, one from the Quran and the other from the Bible which speak of the terrible fate of these nations may be given below:

But when the promise of My Lord shall come to pass, He will break it into pieces. And the promise of my Lord is certainly true. And on that day We shall leave some of them to surge against others and the trumpet will be blown. Then shall We gather them all together. And on that day We shall present Hell, face to face, to disbelievers (18:99-101).

And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that My fury shall come up in My face. For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath have I spoken. Surely, in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel. So the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the heaven and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at My presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall and every wall shall fall to the ground...And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood: and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands and upon the many people that are with him an overflowing rain, and great pestilence, fire and brimstone (Ezek. 38:18-22).

CHAPTER 112

AL-IKHLĀŞ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

That this is one of the earliest Meccan *Sūrahs* is the view of Ḥasan, ‘Ikrimah and, above all, Ibn Mas‘ūd, one of the earliest of the Holy Prophet’s Companions. However, Ibn ‘Abbās, though much younger than ‘Abdullāh bin Mas‘ūd but regarded as one of the most learned Companions, thinks that the *Sūrah* was revealed at Medina. In view of these conflicting opinions of these two very respected Companions of the Holy Prophet some commentators of the Quran are inclined to think that the *Sūrah* was revealed twice, first at Mecca and then at Medina. Among the orientalists, Muir places it among the earliest Meccan *Sūrahs*, while Nöldeke assigns it to the end of the first period—about the fourth year of the Call.

In view of the importance of its subject matter, the *Sūrah* has come to be known by several names, of which some are: At-Tafrīd; At-Tajrīd; At-Tauḥīd, Al-Ikhlās; Al-Ma‘rifah; Aş-Şamad; Al-Athāth; An-Nūr, etc.

Because it deals with the basic religious belief—Unity of God—the *Sūrah* has the distinction of being called by the Holy Prophet as the greatest of all the Quranic *Sūrahs* (Ma‘ānī). ‘Ā’ishah is reported to have said that before going to bed the Holy Prophet used to recite this and the last two *Sūrahs*, at least thrice (Abū-Dāwūd). The *Sūrah* is entitled Ikhlās because its recitation and deliberation over its subject matter, is calculated to foster in the reader a deep attachment to God.

What adds to the great importance of the *Sūrah* is the fact that while Al-Fātiḥah is considered to be a resume of the whole of the Quran, the present *Sūrah*, together with the two succeeding it repeats and rehearses the theme of the subject matter of Al-Fātiḥah.



(AL-IKHLĀṢ)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Say, 'He is Allah, the ^bOne and only;⁴⁸⁶⁷

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ②

3. Allah, the Independent and Besought of all.⁴⁸⁶⁸

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ③

^aSee 1:1. ^b16:23; 22:35; 59:23.

4867. Commentary:

The word قل (say) here embodies a permanent command to all Muslims to keep proclaiming "God is One."

هو (He) used as ضمير الشأن and meaning, "the truth is," signifies that the truth is embedded in human nature that God *is* and that He is One and Alone.

الله is the distinctive name used for the Supreme Being in the Quran. In the Arabic language the word is never used for any other thing or being. It is a personal name of God, neither attributive nor descriptive. See also 1:1.

احد (the One) is an epithet applied to God alone and signifies, the One; the Sole; He Who has been and will ever be One and Alone; Who has no second to share in His Lordship, nor in His Essence (Lane).

According to Aqrab the difference between واحد and أحد when used about God is that whereas أحد signifies Oneness of God in His Person, the idea of a second being inconceivable, واحد signifies uniqueness of God in His attributes.

Commentary:

In view of the above-mentioned signification of أحد and واحد the expression الله واحد would signify that God is that Supreme Being Who is the Source and Fountainhead from Whom all creation has emanated; and الله أحد would mean that Allah is that Being Who is One and Alone in the sense that when we think of Him, the very idea that there is any other being or thing is absent from our minds. He is One and Alone in every sense. He is neither the starting link of any chain, nor its last link. Nothing is like Him nor is He like anything else. This is Allah as conceived and presented by the Quran.

4868. Important Words:

الصمد (Independent and Besought of all) is substantive noun from صمد. They say صمد الله في الحوائج i.e. he betook himself or had recourse to Allah in needs and exigencies. صمد (ṣamad) means, a person to whom one betakes oneself in one's needs. سيد صمد means, a chief to whom recourse is had; a lord to whom obedience is rendered; without whom no affair is

4. He begets not,^a nor is He begotten; **4869**

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

5. And there is none like unto Him.' **4870**

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وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

^a17:112; 19:93; 25:3; 37:153.

accomplished. الصمد also means, a person or place above whom or which there is no one. الصمد means, the Supreme Being to Whom recourse is had for the accomplishment of needs; Who is Independent of all and upon Whom all depend for their needs; Who will continue forever after all creation has ceased to exit; above Whom there is no one. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In the preceding verse the claim was made that God is One, Alone, and Unique. The present verse substantiates that claim. It says that God is الصمد i.e. all things and beings depend upon Him and He is Independent and Besought of all. All have need of Him and He has need of none. He needed the help of no being or material to create the universe. So when all things and beings are dependent on Him and to Him we have recourse for our needs and requirements and He fulfils them, then where is the necessity of any other God?

In fact, nothing in the universe is complete in itself, not even the smallest atom. Nothing is self-subsisting; everything depends on some other thing for its existence. God alone is such a Being Who depends on no being or thing. He is above conception and conjecture. His

attributes know no bound or limit. This is the meaning of الصمد.

4869. Commentary:

The Divine attribute الصمد (Independent and Besought of all) was mentioned in the previous verse to establish the claim that Allah is احد (One, Alone, the Unique), and now in the verse under comment the Divine attribute لم يلد ولم يولد (He begets not, nor is He begotten) is mentioned to show that He is الصمد i.e. God is above need, because the presence of need presupposes that He requires the assistance of someone without whom He cannot carry on His work, and who should continue His work, after He is dead, inasmuch as all those beings that succeed, or are succeeded by others, are subject to death, but those things which need no successor and do not die before fulfilling the object of their creation, such as the sun, the moon, the oceans, the mountains, etc., are not subject to death or destruction. Thus Allah Who has succeeded no one and will be succeeded by no one is complete in all His attributes and is Eternal, Everlasting and Absolute.

4870. Commentary:

This verse disposes of a possible doubt that the previous verses might have created: Granted that Allah is One, Alone, Absolute and Independent of all and that He neither

begets nor is He begotten, but there might be in existence another being who, like Him, might also possess all the attributes He possesses. The verse effectively removes this misgiving. It says that there is none like Allah. Human reason demands, and the Quran has conceded the reasonableness of this demand, that there should be One Creator and Controller of the whole universe. The perfect order that pervades and permeates it leads to the inevitable result that one uniform law must govern it, and the unity and uniformity of the law and the design proves and proclaims the Unity of its Maker (21:23). Thus the *Sūrah* cuts at the root of all polytheistic beliefs that

exist in one form or other in other faiths—belief in two, three or more gods, or the belief that soul and matter or any other thing co-exists with Allah.

God, as conceived and held out by Islam, is a personal God and not a mere philosophical conception; One, Alone, Unique, Eternal and Absolute, without beginning or end, Incomparable, above the need of being succeeded by anyone, nor ever having succeeded anyone. This is the sublime definition of the Supreme Being as given in the Quran; and nothing in any other revealed Scripture touches even the fringes of the beauty, sublimity and majesty of this definition.

CHAPTER 113

AL-FALAQ

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Date of Revelation, and Context

This and the next *Sūrah* are so closely linked as regards their subject matter that though they are complete in themselves and independent of each other, the *Sūrah* that follows, viz. An-Nās, may be regarded as complementary to the present *Sūrah*. This *Sūrah* deals with one aspect of the same subject while the next *Sūrah* deals with the other. Both the *Sūrahs* together are called *Mu‘awwidhatān* meaning, "the two *Sūrahs* that afford protection," because both of them open with the expression "I seek refuge in the Lord."

There is a wide divergence of opinion among scholars regarding the place where these *Sūrahs* were revealed. In view of this divergence it is rather difficult to determine the exact date of their revelation. Some scholars, including Ibn ‘Abbās and Qatādah, assign them to Medina while according to Ḥasan, ‘Ikrimah, ‘Aṭā’ and Jābir, they were revealed at Mecca. Among western scholars Nöldeke and Muir hold no definite opinion, but Weil thinks that they belong to Mecca. Taking all relevant facts and historical data into consideration, the majority of Muslim scholars and commentators of the Quran are inclined to place them among the Meccan *Sūrahs*. The present *Sūrah* is entitled Al-Falaq (the Dawn).

Subject Matter

The connection of these two *Sūrahs* with *Sūrah* Al-Ikhlāṣ consists in the fact that in that *Sūrah* believers were enjoined to proclaim to the whole world that God is One and Unique, that He is far above anything or any person being a partner in His Divinity. In these two *Sūrahs* the believers are told that they should not be afraid of any tyrant, dictator or ruler in the discharge of this sacred duty and should hold the firm belief that God is the sole Director and Controller of the whole universe and that He has the power to protect His votaries from any harm or injury which the forces of darkness might seek to do them.

Though constituting an integral part of the Quran, these two *Sūrahs* may be regarded as forming a sort of epilogue to it. The main body of the Quran seems to end with *Sūrah* Al-Ikhlāṣ, which recapitulates, as it were, in a nutshell, the basic Quranic principles, and in these two *Sūrahs* believers are enjoined to seek Divine protection against deviating from the right path and against the mischief and evils which might adversely affect their material well-being and spiritual development. The Holy Prophet used to recite these two *Sūrahs* regularly before going to bed.



(AL-FALAQ)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Say, 'I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn,^{b4871}

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ②

3. From the evil of that which He has created,

مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ③

4. And from the evil of darkness when it overspreads,⁴⁸⁷²

وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ④

^aSee 1:1. ^b6:96.

4871. Important Words:

فلق (dawn) is subs. noun from فلق. They say فلق الصبح i.e. He (God) made the dawn to break. 'Alī, the Holy Prophet's Fourth Successor used generally to swear by the words فلق والذي فلق الحبة و برأ النعمة i.e. By Him Who clove the grain, making it to germinate and Who created man or the soul. فلق among other things means, the daybreak or dawn; the whole creation; Hell; the plain appearance of the truth after it had been dubious; a low or depressed place of the earth between two hills; an elevated ground (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

A believer is enjoined to invoke the protection of God, the Lord of فلق. In view of different meanings of the word, he is told to pray:

(1) That when the night of darkness over Islam has passed away and the morning of its bright future dawns, its sun should continue to shine till it reaches the Meridian.

(2) That God might protect him from the hidden and manifest evil of all that He has created, including the evils of heredity, bad environment, defective education or other corrupting influences.

(3) That God should save him from the torments of Hell in this life and in the Hereafter.

(4) That God should enable him to avoid extremes and to adopt the middle course in all things which is the safest course, since the idea implied in ربوبية is development by degrees and in stages. See also v. 6 below.

4872. Commentary:

غسق (darkness) is derived from غسق which means, it became dark or intensely dark. غسقت العين means, the eyes flowed with water. غسق اللبن means, the milk poured fourth from the udder. الغاسق means, the night; darkness; the Pleiades when it sets; the moon when it is eclipsed; the sun when it sets; the day when it enters

5. And from the evil of those who blow upon the knots of mutual relationships to undo them,⁴⁸⁷³

وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ۝

6. And from the evil of the envier when he envies.⁴⁸⁷⁴

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وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ۝

upon the night, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

وقب (overspreads). They say وقب الظلام i.e. the darkness overspread. وقبت الشمس means, the sun set. وقب الرجل means, the eyes of the man sank. وقب القمر means, the moon became eclipsed (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse may refer to the evils of the time when the light of truth becomes extinguished and the darkness of sin and iniquity spreads over the entire face of the earth. Or it may refer to the evils of the time when one is overwhelmed by distress and privation, when it is darkness all around him, and the last ray of hope disappears. See also last verse of the *Sūrah*.

4873. Important Words:

النفاثات (who blow) is derived from نفث which means, he spat. نفثت الحية الدم means, the serpent emitted poison. نفث الله الشيء في القلب means, God inspired him with a thing. نفاثات means; those groups that spit or emit much poison; those who whisper evil suggestions (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The reference in the verse is to those whisperers of evil suggestions who cause solemn contracts and friendships to break down, and who inspire people with a spirit of

defiance of established authority or with violating the oath of fealty, and thus seek to create discord and dissension in the Muslim Community and to encourage fissiparous tendencies among them. For a detailed note on the whole *Sūrah* see next verse.

4874. Commentary:

The *Sūrah* deals with the material side of man's life as does the next *Sūrah* with its spiritual side. Man is confronted with various kinds of dangers and difficulties in life. When he is engaged in an undertaking of a serious import, particularly when he takes upon himself to spread the light of truth, forces of darkness surround him on all sides; and when he proceeds further men of evil designs bar his way and create all sorts of impediments and difficulties. When at last success dawns on him, persons of a jealous nature seek to deprive him of the fruit of his labour. As protection against all these difficulties, obstacles and perils in life, a believer is enjoined to invoke the help and assistance of the Lord of فلق (dawn) to give him light when there is darkness all around; to protect him from the evil designs of mischief-makers and the nefarious machinations of jealous persons.

What a complete and comprehensive prayer!

The last two *Sūrahs* of the Quran may also specially refer to the time of the Promised Messiah and Mahdī. Verse 4 of the present *Sūrah* may refer to the eclipses of the sun and the moon which, according to a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet were to take place in the time of the

Mahdi (Qutnī), and the last two verses may refer to his enemies who will create all sorts of difficulties for him and will burn with rage as they will see his mission making rapid progress.

حاسد (the envious one) may also refer to the *Dajjāl*, the Arch Envier who will give the Promised Mahdi an obstinate fight.

CHAPTER 114

AN-NĀS

(Revealed before Hijrah)

Introduction

This *Sūrah*, the second of the *Mu‘awwidhatān*, constitutes an extension of its predecessor and is in a way complementary to it, in that in *Sūrah* Al-Falaq the believers were enjoined to seek protection from God against the hardships and privations of life, in the present *Sūrah* protection is sought from trials and tribulations that hamper man’s spiritual development, and the protection is to be invoked not only by verbal solicitation but by deeds and actions that may attract God’s Grace. This is the true significance of the commandment conveyed by the word قل (say). The *Sūrah* is quite fittingly entitled الناس (mankind), since protection has been solicited from the Lord, King and God of mankind (الناس) against the mischief of whisperers from among the jinn and men, who whisper evil thoughts into the hearts of men (الناس). The *Sūrah* was evidently revealed at the same time as *Sūrah* Al-Falaq, both the *Sūrahs* constituting an appropriate ending of the Quran.



(AN-NĀS)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Say, 'I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind,⁴⁸⁷⁵

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ②

3. The ^bKing of mankind,

مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ③

4. The God of mankind,

إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ④

5. From the evil of the whisperings of the sneaking whisperer,

مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ⑤

6. Who whispers into the hearts of men,

الَّذِي يُوسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ⑥

^aSee 1:1. ^b59:24; 62:2.

4875. Commentary:

In the present *Sūrah* three Divine attributes, viz. رب الناس (Lord of mankind), ملك الناس (King of mankind), اله الناس (God of mankind), have been invoked as against one attribute, viz. رب الفلق (Lord of the dawn) in the preceding *Sūrah*, because this one attribute comprises all the three above-mentioned attributes. Whereas one Divine attribute, viz. رب الفلق (Lord of the dawn) has been invoked against four kinds of mischief in the previous *Sūrah*, in the *Sūrah* under comment three Divine attributes have been invoked against one mischief, i.e. whispering of the Evil One. This is because promptings or insinuations of Satan cover all conceivable evils.

Mention of three Divine attributes in the *Sūrah* implies that all sin

proceeds from three causes, viz. when a person looks upon other men as his رب (Lord) or ملك (King), or اله (God), that is to say, he regards them as the main prop or support of his life or slavishly surrenders to their undue authority or makes them the object of his love and adoration. A believer is enjoined here to look up to God alone as the real support of his life, and to render to Him alone true and unconditional obedience and to make Him alone the real object of his love and adoration. Or, the believer may have been enjoined in these verses constantly to seek protection against the ravages of exploiting capitalists, tyrannical rulers and from the crafty priestly class who, taking undue advantage of the unwary and simple-minded folk exploit them mercilessly.

7. From among the Jinn and
men.'4876

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مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ٧

The reference seems particularly to be to the conditions obtaining during the latter days.

4876. Commentary:

The verse may mean that the Evil One whispers evil thoughts into the hearts of the jinn (big men) and common men, sparing nobody. Or it

may mean that whisperers of evil are to be found both among the jinn and common men. The verse may also refer to the evils of western democracies and of the Communist powers that work from behind the iron curtain.

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